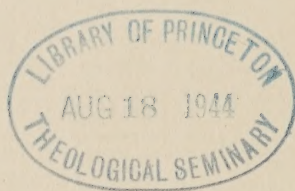


HISTORY OF THE
Archdiocese of Boston

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VOLUME II

1825-1866



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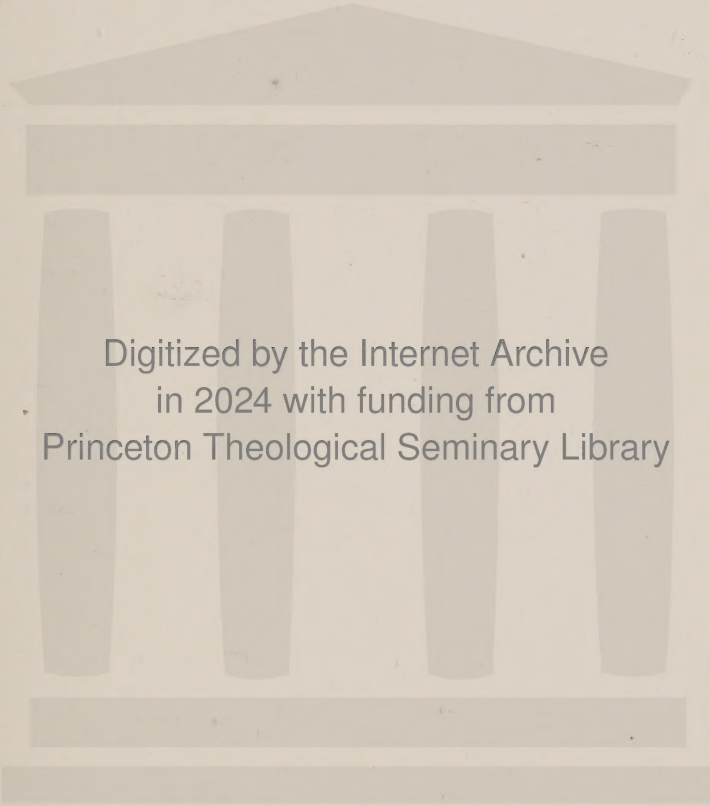
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1604 - 1943

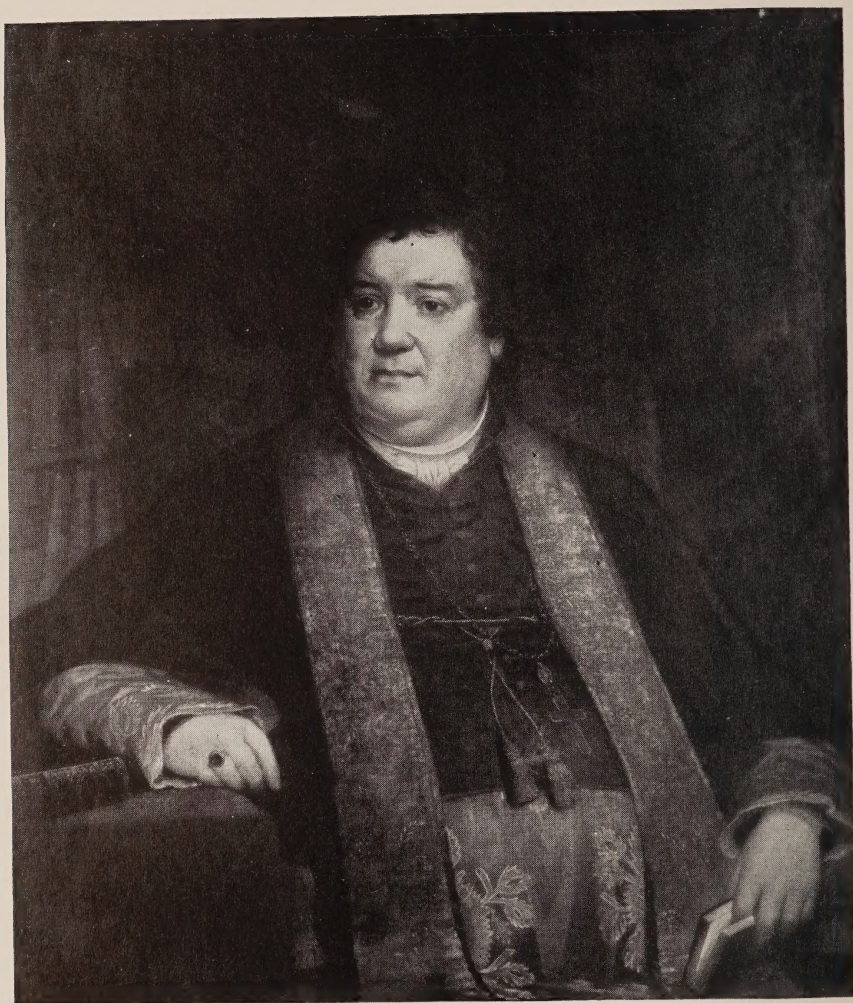
IN THREE VOLUMES

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VOLUME II



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RT. REV. BENEDICT J. FENWICK
Second Bishop of Boston

HISTORY OF THE
Archdiocese of Boston

In the Various Stages of Its Development

1604 to 1943

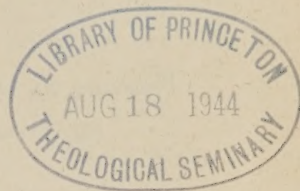
IN THREE VOLUMES

By

ROBERT H. LORD

JOHN E. SEXTON

EDWARD T. HARRINGTON



With a Foreword by

HIS EMINENCE

WILLIAM CARDINAL O'CONNELL

Archbishop of Boston

VOLUME II

New York

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1944

Nil Obstat

EDWARD G. MURRAY, D.D.

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WILLIAM CARDINAL O'CONNELL

Archbishop of Boston

February 29, 1944

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PART III

THE DIOCESE UNDER
BISHOP BENEDICT JOSEPH FENWICK, S.J.
(1825-1846)

BY ROBERT H. LORD

CHAPTER I

BENEDICT JOSEPH FENWICK, S.J.

I

SUPERB EXEMPLARS as they were of French Catholicism at its best, Father Matignon and Bishop Cheverus, the founders of the Church in Boston, had inevitably given that church a somewhat exotic appearance and atmosphere. For the naturalization of the Faith in New England it meant much that with the second Bishop of Boston there came to the helm a native American whose family had been settled on our shores about as long, and could be traced back in Old England about as far, as that of any Mayflower descendant; a man whose Catholic traditions were those of colonial Maryland and old Northumberland, of those little groups of sturdy gentry who had kept the ancient faith of Englishmen and lived in the catacombs through centuries of penal laws and persecutions.

Bishop Fenwick's ancestry in England can be followed back to the year 1180. On the level meadows a few miles northwest of Newcastle-on-Tyne, in Stamfordham parish, Northumberland, remains still exist of Fenwick Tower, a stronghold originally reared in a maze of fens and swamps, which, for nearly five centuries, down to 1689, was the chief seat of the family. A vigorous race they must have been to hold an eminent position so long in that wild borderland: staunch fighters in the wars with the Scots and the French, many of them raised to knighthood, five of them sheriffs of Northumberland, loyal to the Crown even in the sad Stuart days, and — most of them — loyal to the old Faith, like many other noble families of the North, long after statecraft and nationalism had imposed upon England a new religion. Symbolic of the spirit and undying hopes of this faithful remnant was the crest on the Fenwick coat

of arms: a phoenix standing amid the flames from which it would emerge with renewed life and youthfulness; while below was the motto, *Perit ut vivat*, and above, *A tous jours loyal*.¹

From the younger branch of this family, the Fenwicks of Langshawes Manor, sprang Cuthbert Fenwick, the progenitor of the family in America. The tradition that he came over to Maryland with the first Catholic Pilgrims in the *Ark* and the *Dove*, in the famous voyage of 1633-1634, has been disputed, but remains probable.² At all events, he was certainly in Maryland within a few months after the founding of that colony, and he speedily became one of its foremost, richest, and most useful citizens. The special agent and confidant of Captain Cornwallis, the friend and trustee of the Jesuits, a valiant military man, almost constantly a legislator, Speaker of the lower House in 1649, and therefore closely connected with the famous Toleration Act of that year — the first great charter of religious liberty in America — vested by his fellow citizens with more positions of power and responsibility than any other man, Cuthbert Fenwick stands forth as a man of honor, ability, and

¹ On the Fenwicks in England, cf., especially, *A History of Northumberland*, issued under the direction of the Northumberland County Historical Committee, vol. XII by Madeleine Hope Dodds (Newcastle and London, 1926); John Hodgson, *A History of Northumberland in three parts*, pt. II, vol. II (Newcastle, 1832); vols. CXI and CXXXI of the *Publications of the Surtees Society* (Durham and London, 1905, 1918) (records of Roman Catholics and Royalists in Northumberland in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries).

The writer has received much information about the Fenwicks in England and America from Mr. William B. Goodwin, of Hartford, Connecticut, who by many years of careful research has built up an unrivaled knowledge of Fenwick genealogy and who has compiled the most complete pedigree of the family now in existence.

² The family tradition often voiced by Bishop Fenwick and accepted by all the older writers on Maryland history, that Cuthbert Fenwick was one of the original Catholic Pilgrims, has been contested by Hester D. Richardson, *Sidelights on Maryland History* (Baltimore, 1913), I, 12, 14, 15, 417, on the basis of a deposition of Captain Thomas Cornwallis of the year 1652, that he brought Cuthbert Fenwick, as a "redemptioneer," from Virginia in 1634. But as against this we have two depositions of Cornwallis of 1639, in which he claims to have transported Fenwick to Maryland in 1633 (which must certainly mean in the voyage of the *Ark* and the *Dove*). It seems reasonable to accept the two earlier statements, made within a few years of the event in question, rather than the later deposition, made when its author's memory was likely to be less reliable.

high religious principles, of whom his family and American Catholics may well be proud.³

From him descended a widely ramified clan, which, throughout the colonial period and since, has continued to rank high among the Catholic families of Maryland. Concentrated in St. Mary's County — the one larger rural area in the Eastern United States which today, as it has been for three centuries, is almost as solidly Catholic as Southern Ireland or French Canada — constantly intermarrying with other leading Catholic families, the Fenwicks remained conspicuous, not so much for wealth, though they were tolerably well-to-do, as for attachment to their religion and to old-fashioned standards of honesty, integrity, and solid virtue. The family and related lines have given the American Church not only numerous priests, but four bishops: Benedict Joseph Fenwick, the second Bishop of Boston; his second cousin, Edward Dominic Fenwick, O.P., first Bishop of Cincinnati (1768-1832); Martin John Spalding (1810-1872), second Bishop of Louisville and seventh Archbishop of Baltimore; and John Lancaster Spalding (1840-1916), first Bishop of Peoria.⁴

II

From Cuthbert Fenwick (died, 1656), through his son Richard (1652-1714), through the latter's youngest son, Ignatius, of Piney Point (1690-1732), through the latter's youngest son, George, of Chance's Conclusion (died, 1772), through the latter's youngest son, George (died, 1811), ran the line that connected the founder of the family in Maryland with the future Bishop of Boston. George Fenwick II married his cousin, Margaret Medley (died, 1829), who bore him five sons. They were: Enoch (1778-1827); Benedict Joseph (1782-1846); Francis (died,

³ The best account of Cuthbert Fenwick is that of Very Rev. Victor F. O'Daniel, O.P., "Cuthbert Fenwick — Pioneer Catholic and Legislator of Maryland," *Catholic Historical Review*, V (1919), 156-174.

⁴ On the Fenwicks of Maryland cf. J. T. Fenwick, *Short History of Cuthbert Fenwick, the Emigrant of 1634, and His Descendants to the Present Time*, May, 1900 (Washington); Very Rev. V. F. O'Daniel, O.P., *The Rt. Rev. Edward Dominic Fenwick, O.P.* (New York and Cincinnati, 1920), chap. I.

1825), through whom alone the line of the family was to be continued; George, born in 1796, who died in early childhood; and George Ignatius (1801-1857).

Of the four sons who grew to manhood, three were to become Jesuits and outstanding figures in the early history of the American Church. This result was doubtless due in large part to the piety of their parents. All sources agree in describing George and Margaret Fenwick as "models of virtue";⁵ "distinguished for an abiding faith, sincere devotion, and a conscientious discharge of duty";⁶ "exemplary among the most exemplary of the olden days."⁷

For the rest, George Fenwick appears to have been an active and successful business man. While beginning as, and always remaining, a planter, he also became a surveyor, discharging important commissions for the State of Maryland, Georgetown College, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, and, above all, the Federal Government. From 1791 to 1795 he was one of the four or five chief surveyors employed to lay off the new District of Columbia and the future national capital. By the latter part of his life he had accumulated considerable property. Apart from his dwelling plantation called "Swamp Island," of four hundred acres, in Beaverdam Manor, St. Mary's County, he also owned a plantation of two hundred and eighty-seven acres in St. George's County; and at Georgetown five lots, on one of which (now a part of the grounds of Georgetown University) he had built for his family a spacious and dignified three-story mansion.⁸

But the dominant personality in this household was prob-

⁵ Rev. Charles H. Stonestreet, S.J., *Discourse on the Right Rev. Benedict J. Fenwick, D.D., Bishop of Boston; pronounced in St. John's Church, Frederick, Maryland, September 11, 1846, on the occasion of a solemn service for the repose of his soul* (Frederick, n.d.), p. 6.

⁶ Richard H. Clarke, *Lives of the Deceased Bishops of the Catholic Church in the United States* (New York, 1888), I, 375.

⁷ Orestes A. Brownson, "Biographical Notice of the Right Rev. Benedict Joseph Fenwick, late Bishop of Boston," *Metropolitan Catholic Almanac and Laity's Directory for the Year of Our Lord 1850* (Baltimore, 1849), p. 57.

⁸ These details come chiefly from George Fenwick's will, dated May 8, 1807, of which the writer received a copy from the St. Mary's County Court House through the kindness of Mr. William Fenwick, of Leonardtown.

ably the wife and mother, Margaret Medley Fenwick. She, we are told, "in a special manner watched over the incipient movements of her children, with a firm and mild and persevering care." She 'prepared them from the beginning to run their high career of virtue and usefulness, and lived to see this solicitude amply rewarded.'⁹ Of her the second Bishop of Boston "spoke throughout life in terms of the most tender affection and filial gratitude, as the one, under God, to whom he owed all that he possessed of religion and piety."¹⁰ Even in her last years she is described as "heartly and jovial," "full of life and jests," 'tripping it up the hill, almost daily, to assist at Mass . . . and generally distancing her young attendants.'¹¹ "Our Monica" the Jesuits used to call her.¹²

III

Benedict Joseph Fenwick was born September 3, 1782, at his father's plantation in Beaverdam Manor, a mile or two east of Leonardtown, the village capital of old St. Mary's County. From his first eight years scarcely an incident has been preserved for us. But imagination can perhaps fill out the gap: a region of enchanting beauty and tranquillity; majestic vistas of blue waters or green woodlands greeting the eye at every turn; the wholesome, out-of-doors, frank and jovial way of living; the Maryland cordiality and hospitality; be vies of uncles, aunts, and cousins in the immediate vicinity; the wholly Catholic atmosphere; the constant visits of the Jesuits, attending their historic missions of St. Inigoes, Newtown, Leonardtown; the lessons taught by good Father Walton, the special friend of the family.

In the winter of 1790-1791 the Fenwicks moved up to Georgetown, partly in order that the boys might enjoy the advantages

⁹ Father Stonestreet, S.J., *op. cit.*, p. 7.

¹⁰ Clarke, *op. cit.*, I, 375.

¹¹ Father Vandeveld, S.J., to Rev. George Fenwick, S.J., July 9, 1826 (*Archives of the Maryland-New York Province of the Society of Jesus* — henceforth cited as *Fordham Arch.* — 207 H 8).

¹² Father Dzierozynski, S.J., to Rev. George Fenwick, S.J., May 24, 1829 (*ibid.*, 209 T 5).

of the first Catholic college in the United States, which was about to be opened there. April 8, 1793, Enoch and Benedict entered what was then called "Georgetown Academy." For the next eight years "Ben Fenwick," as everyone seems to have called him, pursued there his preparatory and college studies.

The new institution still presented a somewhat half-finished and poverty-stricken appearance. Even some years after this, according to Father McElroy's reminiscences, the principal building was largely without laths, plaster, or window-glass; all the books of the library could be housed in Bishop Neale's bedroom; there was but one set of vestments in the chapel, and for the priests one "common cassock."¹³ But already a sound and thorough training was given in the Classics, French, Mathematics, and several other branches. The men in charge — mostly ex-members of the Society of Jesus, which Rome had been compelled by the Bourbon courts in 1773 to suppress — looked forward to the day when, their beloved Society restored, the college would pass into its hands; and hence they endeavored from the start to establish here the system and the best traditions of the old Jesuit colleges.

Among the teachers who may most have influenced the young Fenwicks were: the venerable Father Molyneux, President of Georgetown from 1793 to 1796; the brilliant and bustling Abbé Du Bourg, President from 1796 to 1798, who was later to be Bishop of Louisiana and finally Archbishop of Besançon; the learned Sulpician, Benedict Joseph Flaget, who taught at Georgetown from 1795 to 1798, and who in after years became the first great pioneer bishop of the Middle West; and the devout Leonard Neale, President of the College from 1799 to 1806, who was already Coadjutor to Bishop Carroll of Baltimore and was later to be the second Archbishop of that see. Bishop Flaget's biographer records that among his pupils at Georgetown "there was one to whom he was most tenderly at-

¹³ See his letter to Father Stonestreet, S.J., Dec. 30, 1856, *Woodstock Letters*, XLIV (1915), 10-11; and his "Account of the Re-establishment of the Society in the United States, and of Events Connected Therewith, Written in 1863-64," *ibid.*, XVI (1887), 161-168.

tached, on account of the talents and application, combined with openness and solid piety, which he remarked in him; this was Benedict J. Fenwick. . . .”¹⁴

Just when, and under what influences, the thoughts of this promising pupil began to turn towards the priesthood, we do not know. At all events, it was not later than the beginning of the year 1800. By that time there was formed at Georgetown a little band of six or seven candidates for holy orders, among whom were Enoch and Benedict Fenwick — a group the more remarkable because religious vocations were then extremely rare in this country, and the College, founded in order to foster such vocations, had hitherto produced none. Where and how these unusual young men were to receive their training was a subject that bulked large in the ecclesiastical correspondence of the next few years. It was at first intended that in September, 1800, they should enter St. Mary’s Seminary at Baltimore, then the only institution of its kind in the United States. But certain disagreements between the authorities at Georgetown and the Sulpicians of the Seminary long held up this project. Besides, the young men were needed as teachers in the College. And as, from the latter part of 1800 onward, hopes mounted that the Jesuit Order might be revived in the United States, the more determined grew the gentlemen at Georgetown to keep the neophytes there as possible recruits for the restored Society. Efforts were therefore made to organize courses in Philosophy for them at the College. The Sulpicians themselves loaned two distinguished professors of that subject for this purpose: the Rev. Ambrose Maréchal (1801-1802), who was later to be Archbishop of Baltimore; and the Rev. John B. David (1803-1804), the future Bishop of Bardstown, Kentucky.

Benedict Fenwick, whose course in the Humanities had presumably ended in 1801,¹⁵ thus began his study of the ecclesiastical sciences under these eminent men. April 21, 1802, he, along with Enoch and four others of the band, received tonsure.

¹⁴ Martin J. Spalding, *Sketches of the Life, Times, and Character of the Rt. Rev. Benedict Joseph Flaget* (Louisville, 1852), p. 48.

¹⁵ He seems to have ranked as a senior in the College during the year 1800-1801. Georgetown at that time was not empowered to grant academic degrees.

From January, 1803, down to the summer of 1805, he also served as a teacher in the College.¹⁶

Meanwhile the great cause which the old Jesuits of Maryland had so much at heart was making progress. By a Brief of March 7, 1801, the new Pope, Pius VII, had publicly sanctioned the existence in Russia of the one province of the Order that had always escaped dissolution; and in 1802 he had privately authorized the General, Father Gruber, to aggregate members, old or new, in other countries to the Society in Russia. As soon as these glad tidings were known with some certainty in Maryland, a petition was drawn up, dated April 25, 1803, and signed by sixteen ex-Jesuits and others, requesting Bishop Carroll to inform the General of their desire for admission to the Society.¹⁷ Among the signers were Enoch and Benedict Fenwick and four other members of their group. Communications with Russia, amid the Napoleonic Wars, were agonizingly slow, but by January 10, 1805, the Bishop had at last received Father Gruber's answer, empowering him to reorganize the Society here, appoint a Superior, and open a novitiate.¹⁸ This commission was substantially carried out in May and June following. A few aging members of the old Society renewed the vows that they had made in the days of their youth. Father Robert Molyneux was appointed Superior. Though represented by only a tiny nucleus, the great Jesuit Order was formally restored in the United States.

Before the novitiate could be opened, however, it was necessary to find competent instructors. Meanwhile, in order to save time, the two Fenwicks were at last permitted to go to Baltimore to begin the study of Theology. September 19, 1805, they entered St. Mary's Seminary, which was still located in the remodeled "One Mile Tavern," near the corner of St. Mary's and

¹⁶ The fact of his teaching three years has long been known. The dates of it can be fixed from the College Ledger in the Georgetown College Archives.

¹⁷ A brief summary of this petition, with the names of the signatories, is to be found in (Rev.) Thomas Hughes, S.J., *History of the Society of Jesus in North America, Colonial and Federal, Documents (1605-1838)* (London, New York, Bombay, and Calcutta, 1910), I, pt. II, 816.

¹⁸ Letter of Bishop Carroll to Rev. John Byrne, Jan. 10, 1805, telling him confidentially of the reply received "by the last packet" (*Fordham Arch.*, 203 T 6).

North Paca Street, where the Philosophy Department of that seminary now is. The faculty was small, but it included the venerable Father Nagot, first Rector of the Seminary, and two future bishops already well known to the Fenwicks, Fathers Flaget and David. There were but thirteen seminarians. Benedict Fenwick, we are told, "was no less successful in his studies at Baltimore than he had been in Georgetown, and there, too, he won the esteem and affection of both professors and students. The good Father Garnier, late Superior General of the Sulpicians, loved often to speak of the amiable qualities, the quickness of apprehension, the solidity of judgment, and the happy wit of young Fenwick, whose name and memory were ever fresh in his mind."¹⁹

The two brothers remained but a year at St. Mary's. By the autumn of 1806 they could at last begin their training as Jesuits, since two able directors were now on their way over from Russia: Fathers Anthony Kohlmann and Peter Épinette. October 10th the novitiate was opened at Georgetown. Among the ten postulants then received, the first young men in this country to seek admission to the restored Society of Jesus, Enoch and Benedict Fenwick headed the list; and there was an Irishman who was to be the later famous Father McElroy, the founder of Boston College.²⁰

The more advanced leaders of this band were allowed to spend little more than a year and a half in the novitiate, in spiritual exercises and in further theological study. A longer period of training was doubtless precluded by the dire need of the Society and of the American Church for priests. Bishop Carroll had long had his eyes fixed on the two Fenwicks in particular: "these excellent young men," as he termed them;²¹ "youths of distinguished talents," "young men of brilliant parts."²² On June 11, 1808, therefore, in Trinity Church,

¹⁹ *Metropolitan Catholic Almanac for 1850*, p. 58.

²⁰ The number and names of that first group of novices are somewhat diversely given in different sources. They are accurately set forth in the reconstructed "Catalogus sociorum missionis Americae Foederatae Soc. Jesu ineunte anno 1807, primus post missionem restitutam," *Woodstock Letters*, XVI (1887), 169-172.

²¹ Father Molyneux to Bishop F. Neale, May 23, 1806 (*Fordham Arch.*, 203 S 2).

²² Archbishop Carroll to Father Plowden, Jan. 10, 1808, *Woodstock Letters*, X

Georgetown, Bishop Neale conferred the order of priesthood upon four Jesuit scholastics, including the Fenwick brothers.²³

IV

A few months after his ordination, Father Benedict Fenwick was sent to New York, where he was to be stationed for nearly nine years.

Archbishop Carroll had long been anxious to remedy the unsatisfactory situation existing in the church of that city by providing more competent and acceptable pastors. For that purpose he repeatedly proposed to the Jesuits that Father Kohlmann or one of the Fenwicks should be sent there, urging both the need of the New York church and the advantage to the Society of establishing itself in "that flourishing city."²⁴ After much hesitation, because of lack of men, in late September, 1808, the Jesuits rather suddenly decided not only to accept the mission but to organize it on a much larger scale than Archbishop Carroll himself had proposed. Both Father Kohlmann and Father Benedict Fenwick were to go, and also four scholastics, in order to found a new college of the Society on the banks of the Hudson. By October the little party, "without having a cent in our pocket," as Father Kohlmann declared,²⁵ reached their destination.

Hard upon this decision came the news that the Holy See, acting upon Dr. Carroll's request to divide his immense diocese, had created a new see of New York, and appointed as its

(1881), 102; to Father Strickland, April 2, 1808, Hughes, *Documents*, I, pt. II, 799. In these two letters Dr. Carroll does not mention the Fenwicks by name, but doubtless, as Father Hughes points out in the one case, it was they to whom he alluded.

²³ The date of this ordination, about which there has been some confusion, can be fixed with certainty through Archbishop Carroll's letter to Bishop Neale of June 15, 1808 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 9 Q 6). This is also the date given by Bishop Fenwick himself in his *Memoirs to Serve for the Future Ecclesiastical History of the Diocese of Boston* (ms., *Boston Dioc. Arch.*); cited hereafter as *Memoirs*.

²⁴ Archbishop Carroll to Father Molyneux, Feb. 25, 1807, June 19 and July 1, 1808 (*Fordham Arch.*, 203 R 2, P 2 and P 3); to Father Kohlmann, Aug. 15, 1808 (*ibid.*, 203 P 5).

²⁵ To Father Strickland, Sept. 14, 1810 (*Georgetown Coll. Arch.*, 30, 3).

bishop Father Concanen, an Irish Dominican then residing at Rome. Nevertheless, New York was not to see a bishop of its own for seven years still. The excellent Bishop Concanen, thwarted by the Anglo-French war in all his efforts to leave Italy, died at Naples June 19, 1810. For four years the Pope's imprisonment by Napoleon held up the appointment of a successor; and even then the new Bishop, the Rt. Rev. John Connelly, O.P., did not succeed in reaching America until November, 1815.

During this long vacancy the Jesuits, left in sole charge of New York, labored manfully to lay the foundations of a new diocese. Father Kohlmann, Vicar-General and Administrator, an Alsatian, eleven years older than Father Fenwick, was a man not only of great zeal and piety, but of large ideas and active, sanguine temperament. Though he had been in this country but a few years, he recognized far more clearly than most of the native clergy the future greatness of New York, which, he declared, 'would be before fifteen years another London,' and was "the most important place for the Society in America."²⁶ Another favorite theme of his was that in order to build up the Church in a community, the three things most needed were: a Catholic college for boys, a convent school for girls, and an orphan asylum — a formula which Bishop Fenwick was later to try to apply in Boston. The field was white with the harvest. Although in 1808 there was still only one church in New York, St. Peter's, on Barclay Street, there was a rapidly growing Catholic population, estimated at fifteen thousand, and probably more rich Catholics than in any other American city.

For some years the Jesuit mission prospered exceedingly. The previously discouraged and factious congregation were served with such zeal, assiduity, and tact that they became conspicuous for harmony and piety. A second church being badly needed, St. Patrick's Cathedral was begun in 1809 and dedicated in 1815: a Gothic edifice, constructed on a scale of grandeur and lavish expenditure which Bishop Fenwick in Boston

²⁶ Memorandum of Father Kohlmann of ca. 1813 (*Georgetown Coll. Arch.*, 6, 1); letter to Father Grassi, April 1, 1813 (*Fordham Arch.*, 204 Z 7).

could never think of rivaling. Before the end of 1808 an embryonic college was opened, called "The New York Literary Institute." Removed two years later to a delightful rural estate four miles out of the city — on the very site of the present St. Patrick's Cathedral — this school grew so rapidly that by 1812 it had more teachers and students than Georgetown, and Father Kohlmann dreamed that 'it would in a short time rivalize any college in this country.'²⁷

With the coming (in 1812) of some Ursuline nuns from Ireland to start an academy and poor-school, it might well seem that the good Administrator's program was making splendid progress.

Then the reverses began. The business depression following the outbreak of war with England curtailed contributions, and made Father Kohlmann's extended financial commitments seem still more hazardous to his superiors. The Jesuits in Maryland, alarmed by the deaths of old members and the paucity of new vocations, decided that they had not men enough to sustain two colleges, at Georgetown and at New York. To the anguish of Fathers Kohlmann and Fenwick, the Literary Institute had to be abandoned in 1814. Next year the Ursulines, discouraged by the lack of novices and by financial worries, returned to Ireland. Father Kohlmann himself was recalled to Maryland early in 1815. Father Fenwick stayed on as, in effect, administrator of the diocese, though without the title, until Bishop Connolly arrived; and even after that, at the lively insistence of the new prelate, he remained, as rector of St. Peter's and Vicar-General, for a year and a half.

The long sojourn in New York was for the young Maryland priest an apprenticeship of inestimable value. It was much to have learned how to conduct a parish and to administer a diocese under a mentor on the whole so excellent as Father Kohlmann. He had abundantly proved his mettle. In parish work he had shown himself so indefatigably active that Bishop Cheverus wondered that he did not collapse under the strain.²⁸ As

²⁷ Father Kohlmann to Father Strickland, Sept. 14, 1810 (*Georgetown Coll. Arch.*, 31, 3).

²⁸ Bishop Cheverus to Father Grassi, May 9, 1815 (*Fordham Arch.*, 204 H 18).

a preacher he quickly made a reputation, and was constantly in demand. The chief burden of carrying on the Literary Institute had always fallen upon him, and he was in its last two years Rector of that college. His labors in the city had been varied with arduous missionary journeys to outlying parts of the diocese, trips which carried him as far as Utica, Rome, or the hill country of New Jersey, and during which he is said to have had many almost miraculous escapes from the perils common in travel at that time.²⁹ His pen had also not been idle. When Father Kohlmann, in a famous trial in 1813, had vindicated the legal inviolability of the seal of confession, and a volume³⁰ was published giving an account of this epoch-making case, Father Fenwick contributed a lengthy appendix, entitled "A True Exposition of the Doctrine of the Catholic Church touching the Sacrament of Penance,"³¹ which has been called one of the finest bits of Catholic apologetics of that period.³² Finally, the young Jesuit had distinguished himself by his success in making converts. If he failed in his effort to win over the famous infidel Tom Paine on his deathbed,³³ he was credited with having brought hundreds of other persons into the Catholic Church.³⁴ One of them was a Quakeress, who origi-

²⁹ Father Stonestreet, S.J., *Discourse on the Rt. Rev. Benedict J. Fenwick*, p. 9.

³⁰ *The Catholic Question in America, Whether a Roman Catholic Clergyman Be in Any Case Compellable to Disclose the Secrets of Auricular Confession. Decided at the Court of General Sessions, in the City of New York. Reported by William Sampson, Esq., One of the Counsel in the Case* (New York, 1813).

³¹ The hitherto unknown fact that Father Fenwick wrote this treatise is proved by a letter from Father Wallace to Father Grassi, of July 23, 1813 (*Fordham Arch.*, 204 W 4). The essay extends to 112 pages.

³² Msgr. Peter Guilday in the United States Catholic Historical Society's *Historical Records and Studies*, XVIII (1928), 26.

³³ A letter of Bishop Fenwick written in 1833 to his brother, Father George Fenwick, S.J., describing this attempt, made by himself and Father Kohlmann in 1809, was published in the *United States Catholic Magazine*, V (1846), 558-561. The substantial veracity of this account need not be doubted, in spite of the attacks of Moncure D. Conway (*Life of Thomas Paine*, New York, 1892, II, 414), who suspects that the Bishop dreamt all this, and Mary Agnes Best (*Thomas Paine, Prophet and Martyr of Democracy*, London, n.d., p. 398), who calls Bishop Fenwick's story a "legend." One of the latest writers on this field (Hesketh Pearson, *Tom Paine, Friend of Mankind*, New York and London, 1937), shows how "the daub of hagiography" and "the desire to enshrine Thomas as a secular saint" have completely distorted certain portraits of the great unbeliever.

³⁴ *Metropolitan Catholic Almanac for 1850*, p. 59.

nally approached him with the charitable hope of reclaiming him from the errors of "Romanism."³⁵ Another was the brilliant Wilhelmina Jones, daughter of a famous naval hero of the War of 1812, who was to spend the long remainder of her holy but vivacious life as Sister Stanislaus, a Visitandine nun (the "Stanny" so often paternally or jocosely mentioned in Bishop Fenwick's letters). Few things did more to enhance his reputation than the fact that within a few months in 1816 he led into the Church no less than three Episcopal ministers: the Rev. Dr. John Kewley, first rector of St. George's Episcopal Church, New York; Rev. George Edmund Ironside, head of a private school in Greenwich Village; and the Rev. Virgil Barber, whose early history has already been described, and whose name will recur frequently in these pages. These conversions, linked with those, a short time afterwards, of two more Anglican clergymen, the Rev. Daniel Barber of Claremont, New Hampshire, and the Rev. Calvin White of Derby, Connecticut, were a phenomenon down to that time unparalleled in the history of the Catholic Church in the United States: they formed, indeed, a kind of "little Oxford Movement," which has not, perhaps, received sufficient attention from Catholic historians.

In general, all the evidence that has come down to us from his New York period is highly favorable to Father Fenwick. Father Kohlmann, for instance, writing to the Jesuit Superior in Maryland, gives this picture of his youthful collaborator:

He knows his Classicks, Greek & Latin, as well as any scholar in this country, he has a competent knowledge of his divinity and church history, tho' he be not so completely versed in them as in his Classicks. He has a solid, a quick and penetrating Judgment, an eminent talent for preaching and writing the English. Speaks the French language perfectly. Performs the offices of the church with great edification, is attached to the Confessional, acts with great prudence on every emergency, he stands in as high an estimation of both the Catholics and Protestants (tho' not at all courting the friendship of the latter) as ever Catholic priest stood in this country. He has an esteem for

³⁵ Father Stonestreet, *Discourse on the Rt. Rev. Bishop Fenwick*, p. 9.

spirituals, and bestows on them, as far as I know, as much time as his other duties will permit him, he is simple and upright in his actions, an enemy to singularity, affectation, nor does he aim at popularity. He has borne and forborne much in the college, always kind and of a forgiving disposition to all, so good natured as to want sometimes a little more energy. In short, I consider him as a most valuable member of our Society and think he may be safely admitted or promoted to any degree the Society may think proper to admit any of its members. I add moreover that as R(ev). F(ather) Fenwick knows the genius of this Country better than any other father I know, it will be prudent in yr Revce to set as much value on his advice as on that of any of our other fathers. . . .³⁶

The venerable Father of the American Hierarchy, who seldom mentioned without eulogies the Fenwicks, those "young men above all praise,"³⁷ declared, "Great is my reliance on the sound sense, discretion, and virtue of Mr. B. Fenwick."³⁸ And Bishop Cheverus of Boston, after a visit to New York, reported: "Father Fenwick in particular is the object of universal respect and love. His zeal, piety, and talents need not my praise. His praise is in the hearts of all who know him. He is, I sincerely believe, *dilectus Deo et hominibus*."³⁹

V

Such a man could not long escape higher offices and still heavier burdens. Released at last by Bishop Connolly at the insistent demand of the Jesuits, in April, 1817, Father Fenwick returned to Maryland. At the end of June he was appointed President of Georgetown College, with the added duty of serving as pastor of the adjacent Trinity Church. There was talk at that time, as there had been three or four years earlier, of putting him in charge of a Catholic magazine which the Jesu-

³⁶ Letter to Father Grassi, March 21, 1814 (*Fordham Arch.*, 204 R 19).

³⁷ Archbishop Carroll to Father Plowden, Jan. 27, 1812 (Transcripts from Stonyhurst Archives in the possession of Msgr. Peter Guilday).

³⁸ Archbishop Carroll to Father Grassi, Feb. 21, 1815 (*Fordham Arch.*, 204 K 6).

³⁹ Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Carroll, May 9, 1815 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 2 P 5).

its thought of undertaking.⁴⁰ Twice he was on the point of being sent on a mission to Rome — a city which in fact he was destined never to see. In October, 1817, he became a member of the "Corporation of Roman Catholic Clergymen," the small board which administered the estates acquired by the Jesuits in colonial days; and in this capacity he was drawn into active participation in the incipient controversy between Archbishop Maréchal and the Society, arising from the former's claim to share in the revenues of those estates.

Georgetown at that time had three professors, twelve tutors, and about a hundred students. Under the wise administration of the preceding Rector, Father Grassi, the College had been reviving rapidly from its long depressed condition; and this progress seems to have continued under Father Fenwick. It has been stated that "no nomination of a presiding officer could have been more popular," and that "the College never flourished more than when it was under his direction."⁴¹ But very little definite information has come down to us regarding his policies and achievements as President; and his tenure of office was too short to enable him to make his mark very deeply on Georgetown. After an administration of only one year, he was again called away to a distant mission, to undertake what was perhaps the hardest task that could then be assigned to an American priest.

Since the end of the year 1815, Charleston (South Carolina) had been the scene of one of those rebellions against ecclesiastical authority which occurred so frequently in the American Church at that time. Here, as in other cases, the trouble was due partly to racial antipathies (the unwillingness of an Irish congregation to be ruled by a French pastor); partly to the misguided activities of ambitious and insubordinate priests (in this case, Rev. Dr. Simon Gallagher and Rev. Robert Browne);

⁴⁰ The correspondence between the Jesuit Superior, Father Grassi, and the learned Sulpician, Father Bruté, in 1813-1814, and again in 1817, has many allusions to this project (*Georgetown Coll. Arch.*, 30, 5). Much of this correspondence is printed in "Letters of John Grassi, S.J., to Simon Bruté de Rémur, 1812-1832," *Mid-America*, XV (1932), 249 ff.

⁴¹ *Metropolitan Catholic Almanac for 1850*, p. 60.

and partly to the pretensions of a vestry of lay trustees, who claimed a controlling voice in both the temporal and the spiritual affairs of the parish, and the right to choose and dismiss their pastors. For nearly three years the situation had gone from bad to worse. At last Archbishop Maréchal, despairing of maintaining the pastor (Father Clorivière) whom the Trustees rejected, and refusing to accept the two seditious pastors whom the Trustees favored, resolved to send two Jesuits to Charleston to restore peace, order, and episcopal authority in that distracted city.

This mission was entrusted to Father Fenwick and his good friend, Father James Wallace, an old companion from the days of the Literary Institute, and, incidentally, one of the ablest mathematicians and astronomers then to be found in America. After a stormy nine days' voyage, the two travelers arrived in Charleston November 7, 1818.⁴²

In the next week Father Fenwick scored one of the most notable triumphs of his career. By consummate firmness, prudence, and tact, he induced the Trustees, who were eager to see the interdict over their church lifted, to accept him and Father Wallace as pastors and to subscribe to a set of conditions that contained all that it was essential to demand. With equal charity and readiness to let bygones be bygones, he refrained from asking for any apologies or reparation for the past, but set himself to reunite the long-estranged parties in the congregation — the factious majority and the loyal minority — in a spirit of harmony and forgetfulness of old grudges. On the surface, at least, peace and order once more reigned in Charleston. Trusting above all in a revival of piety to repair the ravages of the past, Father Fenwick showed himself, as in New York, a model of pastoral zeal; and year by year, month by month, he noted the reflorescence of religion in the long sadly demoralized flock.

⁴² Father Fenwick's work at Charleston can be passed over briefly here because the story has been so fully and admirably told by Msgr. Peter Guilday in the first volume of the *Life and Times of John England, First Bishop of Charleston (1786-1842)* (New York, 1927). Very illuminating on the Charleston troubles, in their connection with similar movements elsewhere, is the same writer's *The Church in Virginia (1815-1822)*, no. VIII of the United States Catholic Historical Society's Monograph Series (New York, 1924).

Constantly his interest in the feeble Catholicity of the Southland grew, and his determination, in spite of the climate and the annually recurrent yellow fever, to "put up with my exile, snuffing, in its due season, the pestilential vapour of our saffron colored enemy, and in the meantime watch my own crop."⁴³ The merited reward of his labors was his appointment by the Archbishop as Vicar-General for the two Carolinas and Georgia.⁴⁴

Meanwhile the malcontents, chiefly represented by the Trustees of St. Mary's Church, while superficially obedient, secretly continued their opposition. They intrigued with other dissatisfied groups, from Charleston to New York. There was talk of a congress of such elements to "defeat the designs of a French, Jesuitical faction, who seem . . . anxious to possess themselves of our churches";⁴⁵ and even of the establishment of a schismatical "Independent Catholick Church of the United States," in union with the Jansenist See of Utrecht. Above all, the inveterate trouble-maker, Rev. Robert Browne, was sent to Rome in 1819 to plead for the separation of the Southern States from the Archdiocese of Baltimore through the creation of a bishopric at Charleston.

Rome was sufficiently impressed with the dangers of the situation to agree to this last project, which Archbishop Maréchal himself favored. But the choice of the first incumbent for the new see fell out very contrary to the Archbishop's wishes. The latter had recommended Father Fenwick, who, he declared, had extinguished the Charleston schism, was now governing that part of the diocese with wisdom and success, and was ardently desired by the people as their bishop.⁴⁶ Instead, Rome appointed an Irish clergyman, utterly unknown in this country, Rev. John England — a providential decision, as it turned out, for it gave to the American hierarchy its ablest and most elo-

⁴³ Letter to his brother, George Fenwick, March 9, 1820 (*Fordham Arch.*, 205 K 10).

⁴⁴ Dec. 17, 1819 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 22 C A).

⁴⁵ Guilday, *The Church in Virginia*, p. 113.

⁴⁶ Archbishop Maréchal to Cardinal Fontana, April 28, 1820, quoted in *Guilday's England*, I, 289.

quent leader of the next twenty years, and it saved Father Fenwick for Boston. The situation was, doubtless, delicate at the moment of the new prelate's arrival (December 30, 1820). It might then appear that the rebellious Trustees and the returned and rehabilitated Father Browne had triumphed, and that Father Fenwick had fought for a losing cause. But Dr. England's sharp insight quickly revealed to him the true nature of the Charleston imbroglio, the need of taking a firm line with the Trustees (who were finally subdued by 1824), and the sterling worth of Father Fenwick, whom he insistently begged to remain with him for some time still.

Confirmed in his offices of Vicar-General of the diocese and pastor of St. Mary's Church, Father Fenwick passed two more busy years at Charleston, giving himself assiduously to parish work, supervising affairs generally during the Bishop's frequent absences, finding time also to edit *The Laity's Directory* for 1822, the second earliest handbook of that kind published in this country, and one which, because of its survey of the whole state of the American Church at that time, remains a treasure for historians.⁴⁷ When, in May, 1822, he at last left Charleston, his departure called forth the strongest expressions of regret, esteem, and affection from Bishop and people alike.⁴⁸

Returned to Georgetown, the weary warrior was at first given the relatively easy post of "minister" (procurator) of the College.⁴⁹ After fourteen years of incessant and exacting labors, he was eager for a period of rest. He dreamed of a long vacation

⁴⁷ *The Laity's Directory to the Church Service, for the Year of Our Lord MDCCCXXII*, Revised and Corrected by the Rev. John Power, of St. Peter's Church, New York. Published by William H. Creagh, B. Belmore, Printer. 70 Bowery, 1822. That Father Fenwick edited this work appears from his letter to Father Wallace, of June 25, 1821 (*Charleston Dioc. Arch., Transcripts in the possession of Msgr. Guilday*); Bishop Cheverus to Le Saulnier, April 11, 1822 (*Bibliothèque S. Sulpice, Montreal*).

⁴⁸ The resolutions adopted by a general meeting of Catholics, May 20, and the accompanying letter of the Bishop to Fenwick are printed in the *U.S. Cath. Miscellany* (the diocesan paper), June 19, 1822, and in Guilday, *England*, I, 340 f.

⁴⁹ In his *Memoirs* Bishop Fenwick says that he was then "appointed to the double office of Minister of the College and Procurator of the Society," a statement that has been repeated by several writers. As Father Adam Marshall seems to have been filling the position last mentioned, and there is no strictly contemporary evidence of Fenwick's having held it, I am inclined to think that the Bishop's memory must have been at fault over this detail.

"on the Sugar-loaf Mountain, in company with a few fowls and pigs, a barrel or two of flour and meal, a gun, powder and shot, a dog and a cat, and . . . a small garden,"⁵⁰ in order to reinvigorate himself in good Maryland fashion. When the Archbishop suggested a new mission, he begged off with the plea:

I want repose. I have battled enough in the world. I must now by retirement endeavour to repair the damage I myself have sustained in the conflict. Much is yet wanting to accomplish that object . . . I prefer solitude to an active life. I here enjoy it in great measure. After encountering many hardships, it feels like a calm after a violent blow at sea.⁵¹

For a time his wishes were satisfied even more fully when, after the death of Father Charles Neale (March 27, 1823), he was sent down to Charles County, in his own South Maryland, to replace that venerable priest as chaplain of the Carmelite Monastery at Port Tobacco — the oldest community of nuns on the soil of the original United States. The daughters of St. Theresa, we are told, were "happy under his guardianship," finding "him all that he had been described by their late director, Father Neale, in the various capacities of father, guide, and friend";⁵² and the nearly two years that he spent there may be considered the quietest years of his priestly life.

Even in this comparatively peaceful period, Father Fenwick had one constant source of preoccupation and worry. Ever since his return from Charleston, he had again been called to serve as a member of the Corporation, and as such to take a leading part in the management of the temporal affairs of the Society, and particularly in the controversy with the Archbishop, which in these years reached its climax. Dr. Maréchal now came to regard his former pupil as one of his most formidable antagonists; and, while retaining all respect for him, and ascribing his attitude to the influence of his environment,

⁵⁰ Father Fenwick to Father Wallace, April 10, 1822 (*Charleston Dioc. Arch., Guilday Transcripts*).

⁵¹ Father Fenwick to Archbishop Maréchal, Nov. 30, 1822 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch., 16 P 34*).

⁵² Communication from the Carmelites reported in H. F. Griffin to B. W. Campbell, April 1, 1844 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch., Sp. C. D 11*).

was all the more eager to free himself from such an opponent and Father Fenwick from such influences by helping to advance the younger man to a bishopric. "*Promoveatur ut arceatur*," he wrote to Cardinal Fesch.⁵³

In January, 1825, Father Fenwick was summoned back to Georgetown to become once more President of the College, in succession to his brother Enoch.⁵⁴ That institution had again passed into a period of decline since 1818, and the new President scarcely had time enough to remedy the situation, for his second term in that office was even shorter than the first: by July the call to a bishopric had come.

VI

That Benedict Fenwick, with or without Archbishop Marechal's support, would sooner or later be raised to the episcopate was almost inevitable. What with his long and varied experience as pastor, vicar-general, traveling missionary, college president; the unfailing success that had attended him, even in the most difficult situations; the zeal and devotion which he had unremittingly displayed; his piety, his learning, his eloquence, his practical ability, his genial and open manners; and, not least of all, the fact that he was of old American stock, at a time when nearly all the bishops in this country were of foreign birth, and when the rivalry between the Irish and the French elements in the Church rendered it highly advisable to appoint native-born bishops, he seemed to have every qualification that might be looked for. For ten or eleven years his name had come up whenever a bishopric was to be filled.

He had been recommended for Philadelphia as early as 1814 by some Pennsylvania clergyman,⁵⁵ and in 1819 by his

⁵³ Letter of Nov. 4, 1824 (Father Hughes, *Documents*, p. 521).

⁵⁴ That Benedict Fenwick began his second term as President of Georgetown only in January, 1825, can be established incontrovertibly from contemporary evidence. The statement made in John Gilmary Shea, *Memorial of the First Centenary of Georgetown College, D.C.* (Washington, 1891), p. 62, in the list of Rectors of the College in *Georgetown College Archives*, pp. 222-225, and in numerous other places, that he was President from Sept. 15, 1822, to 1825, is certainly wrong; but how this error originated I am unable to say.

⁵⁵ Archbishop Carroll to Bishop Neale, Sept. 27, 1814 (Guilday, "Trusteeism in Philadelphia," *U.S. Cath. Hist. Soc., Records and Studies*, XVIII [1928], 15 f.).

old teacher, Bishop Du Bourg of Louisiana.⁵⁶ Bishop Cheverus seems first to have suggested him for Charleston in 1818;⁵⁷ and two years later Dr. Maréchal proposed him to Rome as the candidate for that see agreed upon by the American episcopate.⁵⁸ About the same moment Bishops Flaget (of Bardstown) and Du Bourg were also mentioning him for the new See of Cincinnati;⁵⁹ and when that diocese had fallen, instead, to the Rt. Rev. Edward Fenwick, O.P., all three of these Bishops concurred in recommending Benedict Fenwick for the proposed bishopric of Detroit.⁶⁰ Bishop England and Archbishop Maréchal were strongly urging him in 1823 for the Floridas.⁶¹ At the same time he was talked of at Rome for the projected Diocese of Mississippi.⁶² And when he at last had been appointed to Boston, but before the news of this was known over here, Father Fenwick was among those recommended by the American bishops for the See of New York, with more episcopal votes than any other candidate.⁶³ It is, indeed, surprising that he had escaped the burdens of the episcopate so long. Twice the Holy See had failed to appoint him to a bishopric only in deference to the remonstrances of the General of the Jesuits.⁶⁴

He himself may be absolved from any ambition for such high dignities. There is no reason to question his sincerity when he wrote, in phrases some of which seem prophetic of much that he was to experience in Boston:

⁵⁶ Bishop Du Bourg to Cardinal Dugnani, Feb. 16, 1819 (*St. Louis Cath. Hist. Rev.*, I (1919), 187 f.).

⁵⁷ To Archbishop Maréchal, Oct. 28 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 14 J 26).

⁵⁸ To Cardinal Fontana, April 28, 1820 (*Guilday, England, I*, 289).

⁵⁹ (Rev.) John H. Lamott, *History of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati* (Cincinnati, 1921), p. 40.

⁶⁰ Bishop Du Bourg to Cardinal Fontana, Feb. 8, 1822, *St. Louis Cath. Hist. Rev.*, III (1921), 113 f.; Bishop E. Fenwick to Cardinal Fontana, Jan. 25, 1822 (Lamott, *op. cit.*, p. 49).

⁶¹ Bishop England to Archbishop Maréchal, Feb. 5 (*Guilday, England, I*, 573); Archbishop Maréchal to Cardinal Consalvi, Sept. 6 (*Archives of the Congregation de Propaganda Fide* — henceforth cited *Arch. Cong. Prop. F. — Udienze*, 61, f. 868).

⁶² Rev. Robert Gradwell to Archbishop Maréchal, April 13, 1823 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 32 C A 9).

⁶³ *Arch. Cong. Prop. F., Ristretto* on filling the See of New York, April 24, 1826 (*Transcripts in the possession of Msgr. Guilday*, no. 3049).

⁶⁴ *Arch. Cong. Prop. F., Ristretto* on filling the See of Boston, March 28, 1825 (*Guilday Transcripts*, no. 3035).

I never coveted a Bishoprick and with the blessing of God never shall. Those who know me, know I speak truth . . . I have lived too long and have seen too much to be a Bishop, especially to desire to be a Bishop in America, where trouble only is got by it, where the office is every day more and more vilified, and where if the same progress continue which I have seen made, before many years it will so turn out, that he who names a Bishop, names in the same breath, a martyr.⁶⁵

It has already been seen that after the departure of Bishop Cheverus for Europe in September, 1823, when called to the See of Montauban, the Diocese of Boston remained for two years under the administration of the Vicar-General, Very Rev. William Taylor. The long delay in filling the vacant see was due, in the first place, to uncertainty as to whether Bishop Cheverus might not be persuaded to return, and then to the difficulties that arose over the choice of a new bishop.

Bishop Cheverus had from the outset undertaken a veritable campaign to secure the appointment of Father Taylor as his successor. His extraordinary activity and persistence in this matter are not to be explained merely by his warm friendship and high esteem for his Vicar-General: he was obviously haunted by the fear that the appointment might fall to some foreign clergyman, utterly ignorant of, and unknown to, America, as had happened with disastrous results in the recent cases of New York, Philadelphia, and Richmond. Hence he fairly stormed Propaganda, the Nuncio at Paris, Archbishop Maréchal, and others, with letters on Father Taylor's behalf; pleading his candidate's piety, prudence, learning, and eloquence; pointing out that he was already administering the Diocese most successfully, and that under him peace and harmony reigned and would reign; urging that the Catholic clergy and laity of Boston and even the leading Protestants unanimously desired to see Father Taylor made Bishop, that public opinion supported him and would support nobody else.

When, on February 21, 1824, all hopes of Bishop Cheverus' return to Boston having been abandoned, the Secretary of

⁶⁵ Letter to George Fenwick, S.J., Jan. 14, 1823 (*Fordham Arch.*, 206 S 2a).

Propaganda invited the American hierarchy to propose candidates for that see, Dr. Cheverus' recommendation of Father Taylor was brought to their attention. Only one of the American bishops, however, whole-heartedly supported this suggestion — Bishop England, an old friend of Father Taylor's.⁶⁶ Bishop Conwell, of Philadelphia, hastened to bring up the fact that in the troubles at New York around the year 1820 Father Taylor had been a leading opponent of Bishop Connolly, and had even gone to Rome to denounce his superior. To Bishop Conwell, whose whole episcopate had been a struggle against insubordinate priests, this fact was sufficient evidence. His letters both to Rome and to Baltimore were extremely damaging to Father Taylor.⁶⁷ Bishops Flaget, Du Bourg, and Connolly expressed much the same views as Bishop Conwell, and for much the same reasons.⁶⁸ Archbishop Maréchal, torn between his friendship for Bishop Cheverus and respect for the opinions of his fellow bishops, at first adopted an evasive attitude, and finally came out for Father Taylor only when it was too late to help the latter's cause.⁶⁹

While this strong opposition to Bishop Cheverus' favorite was developing, among other rival candidates the name of Benedict Fenwick was preëminent. Bishop Flaget and Du Bourg, who had so often recommended him for the episcopate, had put him first on their lists. Archbishop Maréchal and Bishop England had preferred him if Father Taylor were to be passed over. Bishop Conwell had recommended him, if only in the fourth place. He had more favorable votes than anyone else.

⁶⁶ Bishop England to Cardinal Somaglia, May 5, 1824 (*Arch Cong. Prop. F., Guilday Transcripts*, no. 914).

⁶⁷ Bishop Conwell to Archbishop Maréchal, April 26, 1824 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 15 B 21); to Cardinal Somaglia, June 6, 1824 (*Arch. Cong. Prop. F., Guilday Transcripts*, no. 3031).

⁶⁸ Bishop Flaget to Cardinal Somaglia, May 18, 1824 (*Sommario as to filling the See of Boston*, March 28, 1825, *Arch. Cong. Prop. F., Guilday Transcripts*, no. 3035); Bishop Du Bourg to Cardinal Somaglia, June 14, 1824 (*ibid.*); Bishop Connolly seems not to have written to Rome, but to have made his opinion known to Archbishop Maréchal.

⁶⁹ Archbishop Maréchal to Cardinal Somaglia (evasive), Sept. 18, 1824 (*Sommario of March 28, 1825*); same to same (in favor of Father Taylor), March 16, 1825 (*Ristretto of March 28, 1825, Guilday Transcripts*, no. 3035).

Bishop Du Bourg, in particular, had urged Father Fenwick very strongly, as one "adorned with the principal gifts that become a bishop: namely, piety, zeal for the glory of God, exquisite prudence, and rare eloquence," and eligible especially through the fact that he was a born American.

After making every effort to collect the requisite information and after obtaining the replies of Bishop Cheverus and of Father Kohlmann (then in Rome) to the objections raised against Father Taylor, on March 28, 1825, the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda held its decisive meeting. It was resolved to supplicate the Holy Father to appoint Benedict Fenwick Bishop of Boston. In spite of Father Taylor's many excellent and attractive qualities, it can scarcely be doubted that Rome had again shown her proverbial wisdom and chosen the abler man. On April 24th, Leo XII sanctioned Father Fenwick's appointment, and on May 10th the bull concerning this was sent.⁷⁰ In spite of the anguished opposition of good Father Dzierozynski, Superior of the American Jesuits, the nominee, after weeks of hesitation and the consultation of numerous advisers, decided to accept the burden which God and the Holy See had laid upon him.⁷¹

November 1, 1825, therefore, Benedict Fenwick was consecrated second Bishop of Boston in the Cathedral at Baltimore by Archbishop Maréchal, assisted by Bishops Conwell and England, amid an immense concourse of people. The ceremony, so Father Deluol, the Sulpician, wrote, "was grand indeed. It was a universal joy, I don't believe there was a dissenting voice. I felt happy beyond measure."⁷²

⁷⁰ Original in *Boston Dioc. Arch.*

⁷¹ Father Fenwick to Father Dzierozynski, S.J., Aug. 5 and Sept. 4, 1825 (*Fordham Arch.*, 207 P 11 and P 19); Father Dzierozynski to the General, Aug. 5 (*ibid.*, P 11).

⁷² Father Deluol to Archbishop Eccleston, Nov. 20, 1825 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 24 Q 1).

CHAPTER II

PROBLEMS OF A NEW BISHOP (1825-1830)

I

THE NEWS of Bishop Fenwick's appointment fell upon Boston rather like a bomb. The public, Catholic and Protestant alike, knew very little about the Maryland Jesuit, and it was still completely under the spell of Bishop Cheverus — that "name never uttered but when hallowed with benedictions";¹ it saw in Father Taylor the closest friend and collaborator of the lamented prelate's last years here, and the man he had picked to be his successor, the natural continuator of his tradition, the reincarnation of his virtues, the Eliseus on whom alone the mantle of Elias could properly rest. And hardly less than the magic of the Cheverus name, Father Taylor's own qualities counted heavily in his favor. By his zeal and devotion to duty; his learning and eloquence; his kindliness, affability, and universal friendliness; his gift of striking the chords dear to the Irish heart; his command of the Gaelic tongue; he had undoubtedly endeared himself to the whole community and well-nigh won the reputation of being a second Cheverus.

All the greater was the consternation when, on September 11, 1825, the Vicar-General announced at the Cathedral that Father Fenwick had been appointed bishop, and that he himself intended shortly to retire to France to spend the rest of his days with Bishop Cheverus. All his tributes to the virtues and talents of the new prelate failed to stem the emotion. The first letter of the congregation to the Bishop-elect contained little more than a cold promise of obedience to him, coupled with a warm eulogy of Father Taylor and a plea that the latter might be induced to stay in Boston for at least some considerable

¹ *Boston Daily Courier*, Oct. 4, 1825.

time.² A deputation waited on the Vicar-General with the same appeal. Meanwhile, the newspapers were fairly frank in venting the anguished feelings of the community.³ Samuel L. Knapp, a close friend of Bishop Cheverus and Father Taylor, and long an active and eloquent Protestant defender of most things Catholic, now wrote vehemently that Boston regretted the choice of Father Fenwick and the loss of Father Taylor; it would be hard to make even the most pious Catholic cry Amen to that; the Holy See should take warning from England's history and show "more regard to our republican habits and feelings"; "it will require a long time for any man, however wise or pious, to get the same hold of the affections of the congregation, and the same confidence and influence in this city, as Mr. Taylor has."⁴ At all events, the Catholics of Boston had been too well trained by Father Matignon and Bishop Cheverus to offer any danger of rebellious movements, like those of Charleston or Philadelphia; and Father Taylor was not in the least inclined to play the rôle of a Browne or a Hogan.

It was under these rather delicate circumstances that Bishop Fenwick, accompanied by Bishop England and the Rev. Virgil Barber, arrived in Boston, November 30, 1825, and, on the following Sunday (December 4), appeared before the Cathedral congregation. Father Taylor introduced him in what appears to have been a gracious and moving speech; thanked him for his invitation to continue as Vicar-General; but reiterated his determination to go to France. Bishop England preached "in his usual energetic style."⁵

Two weeks later, Father Taylor departed — which, under the existing conditions, was probably the tactful and proper thing for him to do. Bishop England and Father Barber had already gone, and Bishop Fenwick was left alone to face the huge tasks that loomed up before him.

² Committee of the Church of the Holy Cross to Bishop Fenwick, Oct. 11, 1825 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

³ *Boston Commercial Gazette*, Sept. 12, 26; *Daily Courier*, Sept. 14, 21, Oct. 4, Nov. 11, 18; *Evening Gazette*, Sept. 17; *Boston Recorder*, Sept. 16; *New York Statesman*, Sept. 17.

⁴ *Commercial Gazette*, Sept. 12 and 26.

⁵ Bishop Fenwick, *Memoranda* (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

"He saw himself," as he says in his *Memoirs*, "in a situation far from enviable — in a section of the country to which he was a perfect stranger, without a single confidential friend or acquaintance, and in the midst of a congregation wholly unknown to him and particularly devoted and attached to their late Pastor." ⁶

He had succeeded to what, as Bishop Cheverus had sometimes lamented, scarcely deserved to be called a diocese. The Church in these parts was still so small and weak that Bishop Du Bourg about this time twice suggested to Rome the advisability of uniting the Sees of Boston and New York.⁷ New England was still commonly ranked with the South as the part of the United States where it would be most difficult for Catholicism ever to take a deep root; and as even worse than the South, inasmuch as ignorance of, prejudice against, and hostility towards, the Church were greatest here. Bishop England had the impression that New Englanders had less correct and accurate ideas of Catholic doctrines than they had of the doctrines of Confucius or the Grand Lama.⁸ Through most of Bishop Cheverus' time, whatever moral gains had been made, material progress had been very slow and halting.

In the whole Diocese there was, in 1825, only one strong parish, the Cathedral, whose congregation Father Taylor in 1824 had reckoned at three thousand, while Bishop Fenwick a year later estimated it at five thousand.⁹ Apart from that, there were eight small churches, most of which hardly deserved the name. These were: (1) St. Augustine's, South Boston, which was really hardly more than a mortuary chapel for the adjacent cemetery; (2) the small, unfinished church in New Bedford, located "among rocks," "in the last desirable spot in the town"; ¹⁰

⁶ *Memoirs (Boston Dioc. Arch.)*.

⁷ To Cardinal Somaglia, June 14, 1824 (*Sommario* of March 28, 1825, on filling the See of Boston; *Arch. Cong. Prop. F., Guilday Transcripts*, no. 3035); to the same, Oct. 4, 1825, *St. Louis Cath. Hist. Rev.*, III (1921), 192.

⁸ *U.S. Cath. Miscellany*, July 10, 1822.

⁹ Father Taylor to Dr. H. B. C. Greene, Oct. 26, 1824 (*U.S. Cath. Hist. Magazine*, III [1890], 381); Bishop Fenwick to Father Dzierozynski, Dec. 24, 1825 (*Fordham Arch.*, 207 N 12).

¹⁰ (Rev.) James Fitton, *Sketches of the Establishment of the Church in New England*, Boston (1872), p. 160.

(3) the unfinished and unpainted church in Salem, attended by one hundred and fifty to two hundred people, who were "very poor"; ¹¹ (4) the "very small" brick church in Claremont, New Hampshire, where the Rev. Virgil Barber gathered his one hundred and fifty Yankee converts; ¹² (5) the dignified little brick church at Damariscotta, Maine, attended by five or six families of relatively prosperous Irish shipmasters; (6) the hastily and "miserably built" wooden church at North Whitefield, Maine, usually filled with four hundred to five hundred people — Irish farmers widely scattered round the countryside; and (7) and (8) the two Indian churches, of Oldtown and Passamaquoddy, Maine, wretchedly dilapidated, but attended by four hundred and three hundred Indians respectively. Altogether, according to Bishop Fenwick's estimates, the nine churches of the Diocese had scarcely seven thousand Catholics attached to them.¹³

He was still worse off with respect to priests. The Diocese in Dr. Cheverus' time had never had more than five priests to assist the Bishop. Dr. Fenwick, since Father Taylor's departure, had only three: namely, the brilliant but somewhat erratic Virgil Barber, at Claremont; and two deserving but not brilliant young Irish priests, Rev. Patrick Byrne, who shared with the Bishop the burden of serving the large Cathedral congregation, and the Rev. Dennis Ryan, who served Whitefield and Damariscotta. Five churches, out of nine, were thus left without pastors; "nor," as Bishop Fenwick wrote in his *Memoirs*,

had he any means of increasing his Clergy, or even a prospect of being able to add to their number in his present emergency. The Bishop, however [he continued] did not yield to despondency — he had put his whole confidence in God, who was the strength of the weak, and who could *out of the very stones raise up children* to Levi as well as to Abraham. *He did not take the honor to himself, but was called of God*, through his Vicar Leo, as Aaron was, — and he knew that He who called

¹¹ *Memoranda*, Dec. 25, 1825.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ The estimates given in his *Memoranda*, Dec. 31, 1825, and in his above-cited letter to Father Dzierozynski.

him, could impart to him sufficient strength and grace to accomplish His end, and could also furnish him, in due time, with all the means requisite for its due accomplishment.

In his first letter to his former superior, Father Dzierozynski, S.J., he tried, then, to assume a brave and smiling front. He jested about his "episcopal palace" (Cheverus' tiny cottage behind the Cathedral), and about the marvelous excellence of New England codfish, which, from the samples he would send, would lure so many Jesuits to Boston as would enable him amply to provide for the needs of his diocese. And, he continued,

The Church here is truly a handsome one. I had no idea it was so large and so beautiful. The Catholics in general pious and greatly attached to their religion. The greater part go regularly to their duties, both men and women. . . . The prospects here are great. There is a wide field in this Diocese. . . .¹⁴

II

This optimism was far more justified than the Bishop probably realized. Great changes were then setting in, which were to prepare for the Church on the stony soil of New England such harvests as Fathers Druillettes and Rasle, or even Father Matignon and Bishop Cheverus, could scarcely have dreamed of.

Down to the beginning of the nineteenth century New England had lived principally by her far-flung maritime commerce, her fisheries, and her agriculture. Such Catholics as had drifted in here, being, most of them, not bred to a seafaring life nor much tempted to try their luck at farming that sour and stubborn soil, had remained concentrated in the seaboard towns, such as Boston, Salem, Portsmouth, or Newport, seeking what occupations they could find in the commercial life of those thriving communities.

Since about 1808, however, like other sections of the country, but rather in advance of the rest, New England had been

¹⁴ Letter of Dec. 24, 1825 (*Fordham Arch.*, 207 N 12).

entering upon the Industrial Revolution, accompanied by an equally striking revolution in the means of transportation. Here, too, as in Old England, the textile industry led the way in the introduction of ingenious and ever more complicated machinery, the application of water or steam power, the concentration of the workers in factories, the rapid building-up of new, urban, manufacturing centres. The Blackstone Valley, in Rhode Island and Massachusetts, where, indeed, the spinning mills had begun to spring up from 1790 onward; Waltham, where, in 1813, Francis C. Lowell and others combined spinning and weaving and established "the first complete factory system in New England"; Lowell, where, from 1821 on, there grew up a great industrial centre which was soon hailed as "the American Manchester," the marvel which every visitor to this continent must see, quite like Niagara Falls; Dover and Great Falls (Somersworth), New Hampshire (1821 onward); Fall River, Massachusetts, and Norwich, Connecticut — such were some of the hives of the textile industry. Other industries grew in rapid though less spectacular fashion: the iron manufactures at Pawtucket, Worcester, and Taunton; the glass works at East Cambridge and Sandwich; the shoe industry of Lynn; the manifold manufactures of Providence; the hat-making, clock-making, carriage-making of Danbury, Meriden, and New Haven, Connecticut. Every water-power site in New England was becoming an object of keen interest; every community was dreaming of industrial grandeur. More and more the capitalists of the seaboard cities transferred their funds from commerce to industry, and transformed themselves from merchant princes into cotton kings. Within the first half of the decade of the 1820's, the New England delegation in Congress shifted from the championship of free trade, in the interests of foreign commerce, to that of protective tariffs. By 1825 it was clear that the economic future of this region lay in manufacturing; and new industrial centres were springing up on every side.

Meanwhile, old methods of transportation were changing scarcely less rapidly. Since 1807 steamboats were becoming common, though sailing vessels were not to be completely

displaced for many decades. On improved roads stage-coaches multiplied, and seemed to contemporaries the acme of speed and convenience. One traveled from Boston to Providence in less than five hours; and "if any one wants to go faster, he may send to Kentucky and charter a streak of lightning."¹⁵ The 1820's were the time when America was seized with a mania for canal-building, stimulated especially by the phenomenal success of the Erie Canal, which opened an all-water route from New York to the Great Lakes in 1825. The Middlesex Canal, connecting the Merrimac with Charlestown; the Blackstone Canal, linking Providence with Worcester; the Enfield Canal, circumventing the falls in the Connecticut River between Springfield and Hartford; and the New Haven-Northampton Canal were outstanding examples of New England's zeal to open cheap roads for commerce. And in the late 1820's the question of the feasibility of railroads was absorbing the minds of engineers, capitalists, and legislators.

These changes prepared the way for an ever-increasing movement of immigration. Labor was more and more needed, while, since 1815, the more enterprising scions of the native stock were swarming off in unheard-of numbers to the land flowing with milk and honey in the Middle West. In many factories, it is true, the employers sought to have only Yankee operatives; but for building the factories, the dams, the canals, and for unskilled jobs in general, immigrant laborers were in demand as never before. Both the new industry and the immigration movement were still, of course, only in their infancy, and very small in comparison with what came later; but by the time Bishop Fenwick came to Boston, the trend must have been unmistakable.

Thanks mainly to the influx from Ireland, the Catholic population, which had been so feeble in numbers, and had grown so slowly during most of the Matignon-Cheverus period, had begun to increase very noticeably since about 1820. One excellent index of this growth, as far as the city of Boston is concerned, is the number of baptisms at the Cathedral, which had

¹⁵ Seymour Dunbar, *A History of Travel in America* (Indianapolis, 1915), p. 743.

jumped from 136 in 1818 to 385 in 1825. The later so famous Irish colony in and around Broad Street was already well formed by 1823. While Bishop Fenwick in 1825 estimated the Catholic population of the city at five thousand, this figure was probably much too low. Outside of Boston, this growth was paralleled on a smaller scale, not only in the seaboard towns, but in many inland places which previously had scarcely seen the face of a Catholic. And as the decade drew towards its close, the trickle of immigration was to expand into a broad stream. Whatever other difficulties Bishop Fenwick might encounter, he was not to be the leader of a forlorn hope, but rather of a steadily swelling host, which chiefly wanted officers, organization, and direction.

III

However auspicious the prospects for the future might be, the actual situation that confronted the new Bishop during the early years of his episcopate was enough to tax the courage and strength of the bravest. He had come into an embryonic diocese, in which nearly everything was to be created from the ground up: and he was almost destitute of priests, churches, money, or hope of aid from any outside source.

Throughout the first year he was tied up almost continuously at Boston, obliged, with only one assisting priest, to perform all the duties of pastor for the teeming congregation of the Cathedral. During that time he vigorously attacked two problems, which arose, so to speak, at his very doorstep.

The classical, Bulfinch-planned Cathedral, in Franklin Street, was now far too small to accommodate all the Catholics of Boston. Towards the end of Father Taylor's administration, the building of a second church had been contemplated, and the collection of money for that purpose had apparently been started. Bishop Fenwick, however, deemed it wiser to make a very substantial addition to the existing church. The approval of the congregation having been obtained, and the necessary funds having been raised — rather slowly and painfully — the enlarge-

ment was carried through in the course of 1826-1827. The original Church of the Holy Cross was eighty feet long and sixty feet wide, with a basement rising nine feet above ground. Now, after space had been cleared to the rear (south) of the church through the demolition of Bishop Cheverus' humble dwelling (Bishop Fenwick removing to the house previously occupied by the Ursulines, east of the church), an addition seventy-two feet wide and nearly forty feet in length was built on to the historic edifice. The Cathedral, thus nearly doubled in size, could now hold three thousand persons; and space was obtained for sacristies behind the high altar and for ample classrooms in the basement for boys' and girls' schools. Thus improved, the Holy Cross could long pass as "one of the largest and most beautiful churches in Boston, or in New England";¹⁶ but it was not to show itself large enough for very long.

The second problem related to the Ursulines. As has already been seen in an earlier part of this work, with the funds furnished by Father Thayer and nearly doubled by Father Matignon's prudent management, Bishop Cheverus, in 1820, had established a small community of these nuns in Boston, alongside the Cathedral, where they had since been conducting a day-school for Catholic girls. Here, at least, was one Catholic institution that was fairly well endowed, but it was unfortunately located — in terribly cramped and noisy quarters in the heart of the city. Already in Father Taylor's time, his good Protestant friend, Samuel L. Knapp, had been writing of the need of expanding the institution, so that the Ursulines might give, not only elementary, but also the most advanced, instruction to Protestant as well as Catholic young ladies;¹⁷ and this could be effected only by removing to a more spacious site. As the prime mover behind this idea one may readily pick the masterly lady who since 1824 had been Superior of the convent, Mother Mary Edmond St. George — a name destined to acquire a tragic celebrity in New England.

¹⁶ *Metropolitan Catholic Almanac for 1850*, p. 63.

¹⁷ See the very interesting article, praising convents in general, and the Boston one in particular, entitled "The Black Nuns," in Knapp's *Boston Monthly Magazine*, I (Sept., 1825), 180-184.

Bishop Fenwick, at all events, quickly took up the project. In May, 1826, arrangements were concluded by which he purchased their Boston property from the nuns, on behalf of the Cathedral parish, for the generous sum of eight thousand dollars; while he bought for them, for thirty-five hundred dollars, a farm of ten acres in what was then the western part of Charlestown but is now the eastern part of Somerville. The site was on a rocky eminence called "Ploughed Hill" — now quite leveled away — which henceforth was known as "Mount Benedict," in the Bishop's honor. An ideal location it may well have seemed; in a picturesque, quiet, thinly settled district, only two and a half miles from the State House, and with a magnificent view of Boston harbor, the valleys of the Mystic and the Charles, and all the towns and hills around. Yet it was a hazardous enterprise to plant a convent in a staunchly Protestant community like Charlestown. The land had to be bought through a "dummy," a Catholic layman named William Walsh, with the assistance of the ever-benevolent Samuel Knapp.¹⁸ The nuns were transferred to their new residence secretly, at four o'clock in the morning, in order to avoid "an unnecessary assembling in the streets through which they were to pass";¹⁹ and they afterwards learned that some of the neighbors had planned to tear the house down before they had time to move in.²⁰ Later events suggest that it might have been wiser to locate the convent in almost any other place than Charlestown.

At any rate, in the next three years there arose here an institution whose beauty and even splendor made a deep impression upon contemporaries. The main building (erected in 1827), which faced to the east, was a large and dignified brick structure, three stories high, surmounted by a cupola, with two-

¹⁸ May 15, 1826, Walsh purchased the ten-acre farm from Benjamin Adams, a Yankee brickmaker, for \$3,500, with Knapp, an old friend of the grantee, as a witness (*Middlesex Deeds*, book 267, p. 35). Two days later Walsh sold the same property to the Ursulines for the same price, with Knapp once more a witness (*ibid.*, p. 36).

¹⁹ *Memoranda*, July 31, 1826.

²⁰ Statement by Mother St. George, printed in the *Bunker Hill Aurora*, Nov. 5, 1834; *The Jesuit*, Nov. 15, 1834.

story extensions (added in 1829) on the wings. The broad, sloping grounds in front were broken by flower beds and winding walks, shaded by trees and shrubbery. In the rear was a tastefully arranged garden and a vault for the burial of deceased religious. On the north an orchard, vegetable garden, and meadow looked down, over an abrupt descent, to the Middlesex Canal, the Medford Turnpike (now Mystic Avenue), and the marshes along the Mystic. On the south were the Bishop's lodge, the stables, and another steep slope, given over to terraced walks and vineyards. On this side a driveway led down to the main thoroughfare of the vicinity, the Winter Hill Road (now Broadway). The whole establishment was, for that time, rather sumptuous; and it became, as the *American Ladies' Magazine* declared, "the admiration of strangers and the pride of the Catholics."²¹ "No such elegant and imposing structure had ever been erected in New England for the education of girls."²²

From the time of its removal to Mount Benedict, the Sisters' school changed its character. Previously a day-school, it now became a boarding-school, and a rather expensive one (\$125.00 a year, plus some extras!). Few Catholic families in the vicinity could afford to send their daughters there. But well-to-do Catholic girls did arrive from Canada, the South, and the West Indies; and, still more, the children of the Unitarian aristocracy of Boston swarmed in, drawn by the reputation of the Ursulines both as accomplished teachers and as specially proficient in imparting the courtly manners and elegant accomplishments so necessary to young females at that time. Opened on the new basis in 1828, within three years the "Academy" had sixty-four boarders. It was succeeding, as Bishop Fenwick often declared, "beyond his most sanguine expectations."

This flourishing establishment was, in a very real sense, the Bishop's own creation. He had planned and supervised the execution of every detail in the construction of the building and the embellishment of the grounds. He had planted a good part

²¹ Vol. VII (Sept., 1834), 421.

²² Louisa Whitney, *The Burning of the Convent* (Boston, 1877), p. 2.

of the trees with his own hands. For years he served as chaplain to the nuns, coming out each Sunday and Wednesday at dawn to say Mass for them, and discharging the other duties of the position. He seldom failed to attend the festivals, the awards of crowns and prizes, or other important events at the school. Mount Benedict was his greatest pride during the early years of his episcopate, as later on it was to be the cause of his greatest sorrows.

IV

The greatest problem confronting the new Bishop of Boston was: how to secure an adequate supply of good priests. No theme comes up more frequently in his correspondence of that time. He writes, for instance:

(April 11, 1826) If I had five Priests I could station them all in the Diocess and support could be afforded them . . . Prospects here are very flattering for religion. Every day I receive applications for admission into the Church. The generality of the common people here (natives of the country) have scarcely any prejudice against the Catholic faith. All I want is a good stock of native priests.²³

(November 14, 1828) Wherever I go I am compelled to lament the want of priests. *Ah! Monseigneur, quel bien ne pourrait-on faire dans ce pays avec un nombre suffisant de bons prêtres, de prêtres zélés!* Have you none to spare me? ²⁴

(October 31, 1830) I want six more Priests. The cry from every quarter is: send us a Priest — and they are mad because I have none to send them.²⁵

Other pioneer American bishops, in similar situations, were accustomed to begin their episcopates by going off to Europe to recruit clergymen in France or Ireland. Dr. Fenwick seems never to have dreamed of following this example. He had neither time nor money for a trip abroad: and besides, in ac-

²³ To Father Dzierozynski, S.J. (*Fordham Arch.*, 207 K-O).

²⁴ To Bishop Lartigue, of Montreal (*Montreal Dioc. Arch.*).

²⁵ To Rev. George Fenwick, S.J. (*Fordham Arch.*, 209 K 22).

cordance with the Maryland tradition, he was always to show a strongly marked preference for native priests. His ideal, from the outset, would have been to establish a diocesan seminary in which to train native and especially New England candidates for the priesthood, who were beginning to come forward in greater numbers than in the days of Bishop Cheverus. But so ambitious a project was quite beyond his means, and bitterly did he berue that fact. "O what shall I do without a Seminary?" he bursts out in one letter.²⁶ "All other Bishops have their colleges and their Seminaries (thanks to the Society of the Propagation) but poor myself who am left to *catch as catch can*, and who want them if not more, certainly as much as any of them. But patience, patience, patience."²⁷ For many years he was to wrestle with this seminary problem, resorting meanwhile to whatever makeshifts lay within his reach to meet the need for priests.

His first device was to appeal for help from outside. Immediately after coming to Boston, he implored the Bishops of Quebec and Philadelphia to send or lend him a few priests. He dispatched invitations to clerical friends in Maryland and Pennsylvania to come and serve under him, if they could get the consent of their ordinaries. Above all, he conjured the Superior of the Jesuits to set about establishing the Society in his Diocese, writing, in terms prophetic of a still distant future:

. . . However, if you will but . . . come here, purchase a lot on one of the beautiful hills around Boston and build a College on it [torn — I will] insure you as many scholars as you please, where you will make five jesuits for every one you will make where you are. I will give you too as many missions as you please — missions among Irish settlements, Yankee settlements and Indian settlements. You shall do as you please — command, direct, arrange and I will only obey. . . . You shall make it a second Paraguay; and all I shall do will be to go about and confirm.²⁸

²⁶ To Father Dzierozynski, S.J., Oct. 1, 1830 (*Fordham Arch.*, 209 K 7).

²⁷ To the same, July 27, 1830 (*ibid.*, 209 M 8). The allusion is to the famous Society for the Propagation of the Faith, founded at Lyons, France, in 1822, which was then rendering very substantial aid to several American bishops.

²⁸ To Father Dzierozynski, S.J., April 11, 1826 (*Fordham Arch.*, 207 K-O).

The Jesuits, however, sorely pressed themselves for men, were in no position to accept his offers; and his other appeals produced but slight results.

Driven back upon his own resources, Bishop Fenwick then resolved to take a few aspirants to holy orders into his own house and teach them himself, as Bishop Cheverus had done at times. This "house seminary," started by April, 1826, was to last, with some interruptions, through most of his episcopate — down to 1841, at least. For the young men so honored it must have been a great advantage to receive their initiation into the ecclesiastical sciences and the priestly life from the lips of, and through daily contacts with, a man like Bishop Fenwick, even though the training in most cases had to be brief and hurried. But for the hard-pressed Bishop the plan involved severe demands upon his time — two lessons a day — and upon his purse, even though the seminarians helped to pay for their support by teaching in the boys' day-school at the Cathedral. Moreover, the episcopal residence was not large enough to accommodate more than four students at one time.

Hence by 1828 it was necessary to try a third plan. Bishop Fenwick's financial means had now improved to the point where he could afford to pay, in part at least, the expense of educating prospective priests at institutions outside the Diocese. In the summer of that year he visited Canada and succeeded in making arrangements with the Sulpician Seminary at Montreal, the diocesan Seminaries of Montreal and Quebec, and the College at Chambly, whereby these institutions generously undertook to receive his students on the mere understanding that he would pay what he could towards their expenses. From that time on, he regularly had a number of young men preparing for the priesthood in Canada, and he soon began to have others intermittently at Mount St. Mary's, Emmitsburg (Maryland), St. Mary's Seminary at Baltimore, or Georgetown.

Finally, one other resource, employed from the beginning, was to accept priests from outside who, spontaneously or by invitation, came to offer their services.

In one way or another, Bishop Fenwick succeeded, during the

first five years of his rule, in giving the Diocese of Boston what it had never had before: a fairly considerable body of priests. This painfully slow but crucially important progress can best be measured by the figures for the total number of his clergy which he recorded in his *Memoranda* at the end of each year. They run:

1825.....	3
1826.....	5
1827.....	8
1828.....	8
1829.....	10
1830.....	14

The earliest recruits for the almost empty ranks were the first three members of the house seminary: James Fitton and William Wiley (received about April, 1826) and William Tyler (entered in the following September). They were a remarkable trio: all native Americans, united by what was to prove a lifelong friendship, and destined to do great things for the Church in New England.

The first of these men was the son of Abraham Fitton, a sturdy wheelwright and zealous Catholic, who had emigrated from that old stronghold of the Faith, Preston, in Lancashire, England. James Fitton, born in Boston, on the site of the present Post Office, April 10, 1805, and baptized by Father Matignon, grew up a rugged and pious lad, of whom it is told that, after his family removed to Roxbury, he used to walk in daily from where the Mission Church now stands to Franklin Street to serve Mass at the Cathedral. Bishop Cheverus, impressed with his fidelity and other promising qualities, encouraged him to think of an ecclesiastical vocation and directed his studies. After spending a year or so at the Rev. Virgil Barber's Academy at Claremont,²⁹ the young man was then admitted to tonsure by Dr. Fenwick December 24, 1825 — the first candidate for the priesthood accepted by the new Bishop.

²⁹ In the incomplete financial records of the Academy, preserved in the Georgetown College Archives, James Fitton appears as having boarded there from Sept. 7, 1824, to May 18, 1825.

It was a happy choice, for the future Father Fitton was for over half a century to conduct the most strenuous and fruitful kind of an apostolate throughout the six New England States, and to win the reputation of having been the greatest missionary priest in the history of the Diocese of Boston.³⁰

If the career of Father Fitton was to be almost a religious epic, the story of William Wiley, it has been said, deserves a place in a Second Nocturn.³¹ Born in New York, in 1803 or 1804, of Protestant parents, whom he never knew; reared in an orphan asylum; apprenticed out successively to two cruel shoemakers, and then to a bigoted upstate farmer; befriended by a zealous and exemplary Irishman, who aroused in the pious lad an interest in the Catholic faith and loaned him an inestimable treasure, "The Poor Man's Catechism"; goaded to desperation by his master's gibes about "popish trash" and "popish mummeries," until he decided to run away; heading towards Boston because the Irishman had told him there was a Catholic church and a Catholic bishop there; making the long journey mostly on foot, in the depth of winter, penniless, ragged, frozen, starving — such, in brief, was the Odyssey of Wiley's early life. Then fortune at last began to smile upon him. In an employment office he met the Olympian but warm-hearted President Kirkland, of Harvard, who took him into his service, and later secured for him a good position in Boston. In spite of the humility which at first would allow him only to gaze wistfully from the outside at so holy a place as the Catholic church, he in some way encountered Father Lariscy, who instructed and baptized him, after which Bishop Cheverus gave him Confirmation (August, 1820).

Immediately, the young convert began to yearn for the priesthood, though for long he would confide that dream to no one. First he must educate himself, for he had had no schooling

³⁰ Father Fitton's history is best known, in spite of his attempts at self-concealment, through his *Sketches of the Establishment of the Church in New England* (Boston, 1872). See also (Rev.) L. P. McCarthy, *Sketch of the Life and Missionary Labors of Rev. James Fitton* (Publications of the New England Catholic Historical Society, no. 8, Boston, 1908).

³¹ Rt. Rev. Thomas S. Duggan, *The Catholic Church in Connecticut* (New York, 1930), p. 44.

since the age of nine. For five years he toiled, not only by himself but under the private instruction of a distinguished teacher: Ebenezer Pemberton, who once, as a tutor at Princeton, had taught President James Madison and Aaron Burr, and later, as Principal of Andover Academy, had been the master of Wiley's patron, President Kirkland. Even yet it was only a strange accident that brought the young man's secret to the knowledge of the ecclesiastical authorities of Boston. About the beginning of the year 1826, Wiley, hearing that the Rev. Dr. Jarvis, late rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Boston, was about to depart for a long stay in Europe, applied to that clergyman to be taken along as a servant, avowing that his hope was to meet Bishop Cheverus in France and to study under him for the priesthood. Dr. Jarvis, seeking a character reference, transmitted this news to Father Byrne at the Cathedral. The latter informed Bishop Fenwick, who at once summoned Wiley, and, after testing his vocation, gladly agreed to take him into his house seminary. The Diocese of Boston has, perhaps, known no more truly sanctified priest than this convert, who had struggled so hard for the grace of faith and of the priesthood.³²

The third member of this group, William Tyler, belonged to that celebrated Barber-Tyler clan whose conversion has already been described in this work. The son of Noah Tyler and his wife, Abigail Barber, the sister of the Rev. Daniel Barber, William Tyler was born at Derby, Vermont, June 5, 1806. His parents having returned to Claremont in his early childhood, he grew up on a farm there, was received into the Church at the age of fifteen, and spent two years, probably, as pupil and prefect at his cousin Virgil Barber's Academy. Deeply impressed, doubtless, by the latter's example, and inflamed with the same zeal for his new faith that drove his four sisters and seven cousins into the religious life, the young man quickly

³² The principal source for Father Wiley's early life is the sermon preached at the parochial Month's Mind Mass following his death, by his great friend, Father George F. Haskins, printed in *The Pilot*, May 26, 1855, and reprinted (for the most part) by Father O'Donnell in *History of the Catholic Church in the New England States* (Boston, 1899), II, 331-333; hereafter cited as *The Catholic Church in New England*.

made up his mind that he wanted to be a priest. In September, 1826, therefore, Daniel Barber brought him to Boston and presented him to Bishop Fenwick, who at once accepted him as a seminarian. Tall, thin, handsome, bespectacled, never so learned or so brilliant intellectually as Virgil Barber, but steady, serious, pious, humble, and completely forgetful of self, Tyler soon won the Bishop's special confidence and intimacy. He was to be the first New Englander raised to the episcopate.³³

The first priests added to Bishop Fenwick's original little staff of three were the Rev. John Mahony and the Rev. Charles D. Ffrench, O.P., who presented themselves and were accepted in the autumn of 1826.

The former, born in County Kerry about 1781, had come to this country in 1818 and, while serving various missions in Maryland and Virginia, had shown himself to be a serious, hard-working, and conscientious priest.³⁴

Father Ffrench was a man of more outstanding personality, and one who was to render notable service to the Church in New England; but also one whose life story contains several stormy chapters, and is still beset with numerous uncertainties. Born in Galway in 1775, he sprang from one of the fourteen patrician families (the "tribes of Galway") which for centuries had dominated the Queen City of Western Ireland. While the Ffrenches had in general remained true to the old faith down to about the time of the Treaty of Limerick, in the eighteenth century not a few of them, to save their tottering fortunes, went over to the established Anglican Church. Charles' father, the Rev. Edmund Ffrench (died in 1786), was Protestant "Warden" (rector) of Galway's historic church of St. Nicholas, and at one time Mayor of the city, while his cousin, Thomas, first Baron Ffrench, was one of the leading Catholic Peers of Ireland.³⁵

³³ See Thomas F. Cullen, "William Barber Tyler (1806-1849)" in *Cath. Hist. Rev.*, XXIII (1937), 17-30; "Memorial of the Rt. Rev. William Tyler, First Catholic Bishop of Hartford, Conn. Translated by Rev. J. M. Toohey, C.S.C., from the original French written by Edward P. Le Prohon, A.M., M.D.," in U.S. Cath. Hist. Soc., *Records and Studies*, XII (1895), 2-10.

³⁴ Archbishop Maréchal to Father McElroy, S.J., April 18, 1825 (*Fordham Arch.*, 207 R 14a).

³⁵ From a collateral branch of this family, settled in Roscommon, came Sir John French, Earl of Ypres, the well-known British field marshal of the First World War.

Placed in this religiously divided and uncertain little world, Charles Ffrench, though brought up as a Protestant, early decided to become a Catholic. A couple of childhood adventures in stealing off secretly to Mass, which seemed to him like a vision of heaven, led him, at the age of fourteen, to begin taking instructions from a priest, in which he induced his brother Edmund to join. After three years' preparation the two youths were publicly received into the Church — a somewhat heroic step on their part, for it meant renouncing wealth, social position, and flattering prospects; it meant being cut off by their guardian from any share in their father's inheritance, and being cast out-of-doors. Undismayed, the young neophytes, both eager to become priests, sought admission to the neighboring Dominican Convent, to which the Ffrenches had furnished more than one member in the not distant past. After making their novitiate and classical studies at Esker, they were sent for Theology to the Convent of Corpo Santo at Lisbon, where Charles was ordained December 21, 1799, and Edmund in 1804.³⁶

Henceforth the fortunes of the two brothers were to diverge strangely. While Edmund in his native land pursued a calm and even course which brought him to the episcopate,³⁷ Charles' life was long almost an Iliad of woes — and, partly, it must be feared, through his own fault. A man of imposing presence, tall, robust, strikingly handsome, witty, genial, affable; a natural leader, an excellent speaker, a magnificent singer; unshakably devoted to the faith and to the vocation that he had embraced, he seemed to have all the qualities required for a successful and brilliant career. But judgment, prudence, and self-control he appears, at times at least, to have lacked.

After returning to Ireland about 1803, he presently fixed

³⁶A chief source for the early, and, to a less extent, the later, life of Father Ffrench is the memoir written by him in 1840, entitled *The Conversion of Charles Ffrench to the Catholic Church* (ms.: original in the archives of San Clemente at Rome; a photostat copy at the Dominican College, Washington, from which the Boston Diocesan Archives have a transcript, through the kindness of Very Rev. Victor F. O'Daniel, O.P., and Very Rev. James B. Walker, O.P.).

³⁷He became Catholic Warden of St. Nicholas', Galway, in 1813, and then Bishop of Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora, 1824-1852.

himself at Dublin, where for five years he conducted a flourishing private school, while also serving a neighboring church. Then, whether by mismanagement, misfortune, or, as he alleged, the treachery of one whom he trusted, he was forced into bankruptcy, his school sold at auction. In this crash he lost some bonds belonging to an old lady which had been entrusted to him, thereby incurring at least a debt of honor, the payment of which was to preoccupy his mind for many years. Being in Lisbon on a visit to a dying relative when the news of these disasters reached him, Father Ffrench lingered there for nearly a year and then decided to go out to America. His motives were both an old ambition to attempt an apostolate among the Irish immigrants and the Protestants of the New World, and the hope of saving up money enough to pay that debt in Ireland.³⁸

Sailing from Lisbon May 15, 1812, intending to settle in the United States, Father Ffrench was forced by the outbreak of our war with England to land, instead, at St. John, New Brunswick. His services having been accepted by the Bishop of Quebec, he spent most of the next five years in charge of a huge mission, extending for three hundred miles across New Brunswick, from St. John almost to the Bay of Chaleur. During those years he undoubtedly displayed remarkable activity in building churches and rectories and in serving his poor and widely scattered flock. Unfortunately, however, by imprudent conduct he exposed himself to charges — probably greatly exaggerated, possibly entirely false — which were believed at Quebec and which led Bishop Plessis, in June, 1817, to withdraw the faculties he had given him. The luckless priest thereupon betook himself at the end of the year to New York, where his compatriot Bishop Connolly stationed him at St. Peter's Church, which Father Fenwick had once served.

Unhappily, a struggle had just broken out between the Bishop, supported by the rank and file of the Irish Catholics, and the Trustees of St. Peter's, supported by the more well-to-do

³⁸ The reasons why Father Ffrench left Ireland are cleared up, in great part, at least, by a long retrospective letter which he wrote Bishop Fenwick May 10, 1838 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*) — a letter which seems to have escaped the attention of all who have hitherto touched upon this subject.

members of the two New York congregations. Into this contest Father Ffrench threw himself with a vigor and vehemence that soon made him the hero of the Bishop's party and the *bête noire* of the opposing faction. All the stories circulated against him in Canada were taken up, publicized, and carried to Rome even, when the Rev. William Taylor, later Vicar-General of Boston, went on a mission thither, in the interest of the Trustees' party, in 1820. While finding these charges unproven, the Sacred Congregation *de Propaganda Fide* finally decided that, in order to restore peace to the Church in New York, both Fathers Ffrench and Taylor should be removed from the Diocese. Partially consoled by the gratitude and warm goodwill of Bishop Connolly and the majority of New York Catholics, Father Ffrench, therefore, departed, in March, 1822, and after nearly losing his life in a shipwreck, arrived once more in St. John.

There he lived for the next four years rather quietly on a small and heavily mortgaged farm, which he had bought in the futile hope of making a little money with which to pay that debt in Dublin. As the undying distrust of Bishop Plessis would allow him to perform no priestly work in the Diocese of Quebec, though the Catholic congregation of St. John clamored to have him for their pastor, he was reduced to intermittently conducting a private school.³⁹ For him it must have seemed like a deliverance from the tomb when Bishop Fenwick accepted his services. And it speaks much for the Bishop's charity and judgment that, discerning the real worth of this man beneath the cloud of denunciations and suspicions, he was willing to give him a new chance, and thereby gained for the Diocese of Boston one of its most useful priests of that period.

December 23, 1827, the Bishop had the satisfaction of ordaining Fitton, Wiley, and a young Irishman named John Smith, who had recently been added to the house seminary. The last-

³⁹ One purpose of his return to New Brunswick was to collect materials for the pamphlet which he published at St. John in 1822: *A Short Memoir, with Some Documents in Vindication of the Charges Made by Malicious Persons against the Character of the Rev. Charles Ffrench, Addressed to the Roman Catholics of British America and the United States.*

named priest, however, in the following year suffered a mental breakdown, which compelled his return to his native land.

At the beginning of 1828 there arrived a new volunteer for the Diocese, the Rev. Robert D. Woodley, a Virginian, who had graduated with distinction at Georgetown in 1825, the last year of Bishop Fenwick's presidency there, and had made his novitiate in the clerical life under Bishop England, of Charleston.

The next year saw the ordination (May 3rd) of Rev. William Tyler, whose youth alone had kept him back longer than his friends Fitton and Wiley, and of two newcomers, Rev. Bernard O'Cavanagh (July 19th) and Rev. Thomas J. O'Flaherty (September 6th). Father O'Cavanagh, who had made his studies at Emmitsburg, was an amiable, eloquent, and scholarly young man, who seemed to offer much promise. And "Dr. O'Flaherty," as he was always called, was to prove one of the most eminent priests of that generation. Born at Tralee, County Kerry, about 1799, and well educated in the schools of his native land and at Paris, he had begun ecclesiastical studies at Maynooth College and then, for some reason, abandoned them. Coming to this country around 1820, he had presided over several academies in Virginia and studied medicine at Philadelphia. Scarcely had he become a physician, however, when his old desire for the priesthood revived. Arriving in Boston early in 1829, he presented himself to the Bishop as a candidate for holy orders, was received into the house seminary, and, after only seven months of renewed theological studies, was ordained.⁴⁰ Immediately he forged to the front in the confidence of both the Bishop and the people. As preacher, editor, Vicar-General (March 7, 1830), he quickly took rank as the second clergyman of the Diocese; while his vigorous and winning personality, his warm Irish heart, his ardent Irish patriotism, his fervid eloquence with tongue and pen — highflown and bombastic though it may appear today — made him the idol of his fellow countrymen in Boston.

⁴⁰ The chief sources for Dr. O'Flaherty's little known early life are: his letter to Bishop England, of Sept. 29, 1826 (*Charleston Dioc. Arch., Guilday Transcripts*, no. 4859); Bishop Fenwick's *Memoranda*, Jan. 18 and Feb. 13, 1829; the obituary notice in *The Pilot*, April 4, 1846.

A banner year in this respect, 1830 brought four more priests to Bishop Fenwick's growing staff. Three of them were young men whom he ordained that year: the Rev. Michael Healy, a pious and lovable youth from the County Kilkenny, who had studied in Montreal; the Rev. John Corry,⁴¹ an Emmitsburg alumnus from the Diocese of Kilmore, who was to prove himself an able, energetic, and devout, though somewhat gruff and tactless, priest; and the Rev. Peter Connolly, an Ulsterman, who had made his studies in Ireland — a healthy young giant, of a happy, or perhaps happy-go-lucky, disposition, whose career in the Diocese was not to be an unqualified success. The fourth new recruit, the Rev. Jeremiah O'Callaghan, was an eccentric but capable and genuinely holy priest, born in the County Kerry about 1780 and ordained for the Diocese of Cloyne in 1805. Extreme views into which he had fallen in regard to the sinfulness, not only of usury, but of taking any interest on money, and of the banking system in general, had brought him into serious difficulties with his Bishop (1819); and for eleven years good Father O'Callaghan had wandered around the earth, twice visiting Rome to appeal to the Holy See, tutoring a son of his great friend, the celebrated William Cobbett, in London, and searching Ireland, England, Canada, and the United States for a bishop willing to employ him. At last he met Dr. Fenwick. The latter, recognizing that, placed in some rural region where bankers and their wickedness were all but unknown, this amiable theorist might do little harm and very much good, was wise enough to accept him, thus winning for New England one of its most effective missionary priests of the next thirty years.⁴²

⁴¹ Father Corry's life is traced rather fully and with many otherwise unknown details in a rare and valuable little volume by Rt. Rev. Msgr. John F. Glavin, *St. John's Church, Rensselaer, New York: Golden Jubilee Souvenir, 1851-1901* (Albany, 1902) — of which I owe a copy to the kindness of its author, the present venerable pastor of that church.

⁴² The earlier life of Father O'Callaghan is most fully set forth in his own book, *Usury, Funds, and Banking* (Burlington, Vermont, 1834).

V

With his little band of clergy thus steadily growing in number, the Bishop, who at first had been so confined to Boston, began, from 1827 on, to travel more and more widely around his extensive diocese, visiting virtually every place where a church existed, or where there seemed some prospect of establishing one. As his priests, with few exceptions, were young and inexperienced, on him fell to an unusual degree "the solicitude for all the churches." Going into communities where the Church was almost unknown, gathering the Catholics together in private houses or rented rooms for Mass and the sacraments, stirring them up to start a fund to buy a lot and build a church, selecting the lot, drawing plans for the church, often supervising its erection, advancing funds from his own hard-pressed purse when local resources failed, laboring to keep the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace within congregations, between pastors, and between congregations and pastors — of such activities Bishop Fenwick's *Memoranda* afford copious examples.

With a more adequate staff of auxiliaries it also became possible to supply priests to churches long left unshepherded and to new congregations that were springing up. Missionary work could be organized in a larger and more systematic way than had previously been done. The expansion of the Church in New England, already adumbrated in Bishop Cheverus' last years here, now began in earnest. Epoch-making in the Catholic history of the localities concerned was the sending of Father Ffrench to Maine and New Hampshire in 1826, of Father Woodley to Rhode Island and Connecticut in 1828, and of Father O'Callaghan to Vermont in 1830. The progress made during the first five years of Bishop Fenwick's rule can be summed up by saying that at that time the Church, which had hitherto scarcely functioned regularly outside of Boston, came to be firmly planted in all the six New England States.

CHAPTER III

THE CHURCH EXTENDED TO ALL THE NEW ENGLAND STATES — I (1825-1830)

I

THE OLDEST CENTRE of Catholicity in Massachusetts, outside of Boston, was Salem — rich in memories of Fathers Thayer and Matignon, and Bishop Cheverus, of that generous Unitarian friend of Catholics, Dr. Bentley, and of zealous laymen such as Matthew Newport. Except at rare intervals, however, the congregation there had hitherto been served only by a clergyman coming once a month from Boston. Bishop Fenwick, visiting the place for the first time early in 1826, was grieved “to see so neat and so handsome a little church, in so populous a town, with a promising congregation, unprovided with a Pastor.”¹ Naturally, then, the first new priest received by him into the Diocese, Father Mahony, was at once dispatched to Salem to become first resident pastor of St. Mary’s.² The parish grew but slowly, however. Though Salem was still the second largest town in the Commonwealth with a population of thirteen thousand, its glory as a seaport was departing, and its industrial importance had not yet begun. Its first Catholic pastor had difficulty in eking out a living, and was doubtless rejoiced when there was added to his mission the city of wonders then springing up on the Merrimack.

The rise of Lowell was an epic of industry which stirred America deeply at that time. It was only in 1821 that Patrick T. Jackson, Nathan Appleton, and other Boston capitalists, attracted by the water-power furnished by Pawtucket Falls, began to make plans and purchases of land for the establishment of cotton manufacturing in what was then the eastern part of the

¹ *Memoranda*, Feb. 8, 1826.

² *Ibid.*, Oct. 24, 1826.

town of Chelmsford. Early in the next year the Merrimack Manufacturing Company was incorporated, and the development of the site and building operations commenced. The same and other closely related groups then proceeded to found a series of similar enterprises: the Hamilton Manufacturing Company (1825); the Appleton and Lowell Companies (1828); the Middlesex, Suffolk, Tremont, and Lawrence Companies (1830-1831); while alongside these stood the "Proprietors of Locks and Canals Company," which disposed of the land and the water-power of the vicinity, and furnished machinery for all these plants. The new community grew with almost unprecedented rapidity. Detached from Chelmsford in 1826, it became the Town of Lowell, and ten years later received its charter as a city. In spite of the depression that gripped the country in the later 1820's, at Lowell bustling activity and expansion continued unchecked, with new canals, factories, boarding-houses for the workers, new streets, houses, stores, churches, or public buildings constantly going forward. The population increased from about 200 in 1821 to 6,474 in 1830. By the latter date Lowell ranked easily as the foremost cotton manufacturing centre of America; and because of the volume of its output, the perfection of its organization, and the highly paternalistic system adopted to safeguard the well-being and the morals of its operatives, it passed as "the industrial show place" of the country.

This novel community was undoubtedly a kind of economic barony ruled by "the lords of the loom," whose chief representative on the spot was Kirk Boott, Treasurer and Agent of both the Proprietors of Locks and Canals and the Merrimack Companies. Boston-born, educated at Rugby and Harvard, a British officer under Wellington during the Peninsular War, Boott was an English aristocrat and Yankee business man rolled into one: a benevolent, enlightened, and sometimes exasperating despot, before whose "imperial will" men grumbled but obeyed.

How early individual Catholics began to settle at Lowell it would be difficult to say. It is not unlikely that the first group of them was the German Catholics, intermingled with Irish,

who found employment in the Chelmsford Glass Works, which flourished from 1802 to 1827 at Middlesex Village, on land later included in Lowell.³ As soon as the great industrial development was started, we hear of the thirty stalwart Irish laborers, led by the contractor, Hugh Cummiskey, who came up from Charlestown on foot (April 5, 1822), were welcomed by Kirk Boott at Frye's Tavern, and next day began work on enlarging the Pawtucket Canal.⁴ Within the rising mills jobs in those early days went almost exclusively to natives, and chiefly to sons and daughters of the neighboring farmers. Outside, however, for digging and building, Irish labor was in great demand, and the Catholic colony grew fairly rapidly.

The first comers, arriving by no means encumbered with this world's goods, in a new community ill-prepared to receive a sudden influx, had to house themselves as best they could; and most of them, congregating together, camped out in tents or rude shanties in the open fields on the western side of the village, in what came to be known as "the Acre," or "the Irish Camp," or — less courteously — "the Paddy Camp lands." Of this solidly Irish settlement, with its "Dublin Street" and its "Cork Street," its hastily improvised and unpainted cabins, sometimes turfed up to the eaves, with projecting chimneys made of stovepipe or flour barrels, its animated life and Old World customs, not a few descriptions have come down to us.⁵ Primitive the conditions inevitably were during the first years of this colony, just as they were at the beginning of most New England Puritan settlements, or in the later mining camps of

³ Most of the glassblowers at these works are said to have been Germans (Ephraim Brown, "Glass-Making in the Merrimack Basin," *Contributions of the Old Residents' Historical Association, Lowell, Mass.*, II, 1882, 192 ff.); and that a number of these were Catholics is shown by the records of the earliest baptisms at Chelmsford (1822-1825) in the Boston Cathedral Register, in which one finds such names as Francis Hirsch, Ferdinand Prichtle, Harmonious Berrick (Hermann? Baruch), etc. Some of these Catholics at Chelmsford can be traced back to 1817, to 1810, and probably even earlier.

⁴ Letter of John F. McEvoy, in *Proceedings of the City of Lowell at the Semi-Centennial Celebration of the Incorporation of the Town of Lowell, March 1, 1876* (Lowell, 1876), pp. 132-136.

⁵ Cf., e.g., George F. O'Dwyer, *The Irish Catholic Genesis of Lowell* (*ibid.*, 1920), pp. 7 ff.; Charles Cowley, "The Foreign Colonies of Lowell," *Contributions of the Old Residents' Historical Association*, II (1882), 166 f.

the West. Soon the shanties gave way to neat, painted frame houses, as comfort and sometimes opulence rewarded the labors of the sturdy Celtic pioneers; but the name "the Acre" and the concentration of Irish population in that vicinity were to persist down to much later times.

Where the Irish went, the Church was not slow to follow. As early as August, 1822, Father Patrick Byrne came up from Boston, said what was probably the first Mass in Lowell, at the "Irish Camp," and baptized one child there and eight "at Chelmsford Glass Manufactory."⁶ July 25, 1824, and March 8, 1825, he came again. There is no record of any further visit by a priest for over two years. By the autumn of 1827, at any rate, Bishop Fenwick's attention had been called to the "very great" number of Catholics employed about the factories at Lowell, and he had received several applications (including, according to a tradition, one from Kirk Boott himself) that a clergyman be sent there at least occasionally. Father Mahony was, accordingly, directed to visit these Catholics, "to preach to and give them Mass, and at the same time to ascertain their real number, as also to see what prospects of erecting a small church for their benefit."⁷ After discharging this commission on Sunday, October 7th, that priest returned with what was considered so encouraging a report — although, all too conservatively, it would seem, he estimated that there were only fifty-two Catholic men in Lowell, twenty-one of them with families — that he was charged henceforth to visit that town once a month until further arrangements could be made.⁸ Mass thus began to be said fairly regularly in the historic schoolhouse belonging to the Merrimack Company, on Merrimack Street, which had already successively served three Protestant denominations until they could build churches, and was now placed at the disposal of the Catholics for Sunday use.

A year later the Bishop himself paid his first visit to Lowell. Sunday, October 26, 1828, he said Mass and preached in the upper room of the little schoolhouse before a throng of Cath-

⁶ *Boston Cathedral Register*, Aug. 20, 1822; O'Dwyer, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

⁷ *Memoranda*, Oct. 5, 1827.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Oct. 8, 1827.

olics and Protestants so dense that he could scarcely make his way to the altar. That afternoon he dined at the home of Kirk Boott, and endeavored to persuade his host that, in view of the number and present poverty of the Catholics, and the good that would result for the whole community, the Proprietors of Locks and Canals ought to donate a lot on which a church could be built. Always broad-minded and generous in his dealings with Catholics, Boott promised to use his influence with the Company to that effect.⁹

For some reason nothing came of this promise for nearly two years. On July 13, 1830, Bishop Fenwick returned to Lowell to press matters to a conclusion, convinced that there were now four hundred Catholics in and about that community.¹⁰ In a new interview with Boott that "excellent man" definitively promised to give a lot, authorizing the Bishop to select the site. While the latter preferred, out of delicacy, to leave the choice to the Company, not long afterwards the deed was signed by which the Proprietors of Locks and Canals donated to him 8,140 square feet west of the new Suffolk Canal, "provided that the land is always to be used for religious worship or schools, and that within not more than two years a decent and proper church be erected."¹¹ Spurred on by this time-limit and by Bishop Fenwick's repeated visits, the Catholics of Lowell bestirred themselves so actively that by the end of the year the construction of St. Patrick's Church was well under way — the first church in Massachusetts to be placed under the patronage of the great Apostle of Ireland.

Meanwhile, two other new Catholic centres had been forming in the immediate vicinity of Boston. At Charlestown there had been a rapid influx of Irish immigrants, drawn by employment at the Navy Yard, at the wharves and factories around the waterfront, and at the glassworks just across the bridge at

⁹ *Memoirs, and Memoranda*, Oct. 26, 1828.

¹⁰ But in his report to Rome of April 24, 1831, Bishop Fenwick estimated the Lowell Catholics at 800 to 900 (*Arch. Cong. Prop. F., Guilday Transcripts*, no. 2330).

¹¹ The conveyance signed by Boott as Treasurer Sept. 4, 1830, and confirmed by the Board of Directors, Sept. 13, is in *Middlesex Deeds*, book 302, p. 126.

Craigie's (or Lechmere) Point, East Cambridge. As it was difficult for these people to attend Mass in Boston, Bishop Fenwick resolved to set about the erection of a church that would be equally accessible to both the Charlestown and the Lechmere Point residents. The enterprise went through with a celerity and ease rare in the history of church-building at that time. In little more than a month the Bishop picked a site at the corner of Austin Street and Richmond Street (now Rutherford Avenue), in Charlestown, but near the bridge to East Cambridge; two large meetings of the congregation readily accepted his plans *in toto*; \$6,000 were subscribed with astonishing promptness; and the desired lot was bought for \$2,100 (August 19 to September 27, 1828). On October 3rd the cornerstone was laid and blessed with a publicity and a formality then quite unusual for Catholics. Strongly Protestant Charlestown witnessed the novel spectacle of a Catholic solemn procession winding through the streets to the lot where an altar had been erected; a bishop in rochet and cope, preceded by clergy and acolytes in cassock and surplice, and by a crossbearer; the full liturgical ceremonies proper to the occasion; an address by the Bishop, marked by "commendable zeal, pathos, and effect."¹² That day's events were reported in the newspapers with quite unusual fullness, and evidently made a deep impression both as to the progress the Catholics were making and the self-confidence they were coming to display.

Within seven months the new church was rushed to completion. On May 10, 1829, Bishop Fenwick dedicated it amid a "prodigious concourse of people."¹³ Rather large, as Catholic churches went at that time (80 by 45 feet), it was a neat, brick structure, with a façade adorned with two low towers, each surmounted by a cupola and cross.¹⁴ While served at first by priests from the Cathedral, in July, 1830, it received its first resident pastor in the person of Cheverus' old pupil, the ex-

¹² *Bunker Hill Aurora*, Oct. 4, 1828.

¹³ *Memoranda*, May 10, 1829.

¹⁴ A view of Old St. Mary's, Charlestown, may be found in James S. Sullivan (ed.), *One Hundred Years of Progress: A Graphic, Historical, and Pictorial Account of the Catholic Church of New England. Archdiocese of Boston* (Boston and Portland, 1895), p. 36.

cellent Father Patrick Bryne. With about one thousand Catholics attached to it, St. Mary's, Charlestown, at once took the rank of second strongest parish in the Diocese.

More modest but no less creditable were the beginnings made about this same time at Waltham. Though a small group of Catholics had gathered in that manufacturing town, and others were scattered about the neighboring communities, in Watertown, Newton, Lexington, and Concord, Bishop Fenwick in 1831 estimated their total number as no more than seventy.¹⁵ Nevertheless, "chiefly through the indefatigable exertions of Daniel O'Callaghan,"¹⁶ a young Irishman settled in Waltham since 1817, this little flock was persuaded to undertake to build a church. To further this good cause Dr. O'Flaherty and Father Ffrench came out to Waltham on July 4, 1830, to offer the Holy Sacrifice, for the first time in that town, as far as is known. Father Ffrench sang the Mass at an altar put up (for fear of rain) in a shed, before a congregation gathered in the open lot adjacent; Dr. O'Flaherty gave "an elaborate discourse"; and a collection of \$90 was taken up.¹⁷ Shortly afterwards a lot was bought in a good part of town for \$65.18.¹⁸ With more faith than funds, the Waltham people then hastened to put up a small wooden church (50 by 35 feet), which, though not finished, was ready to be used for divine service early in the following year — an achievement that made Waltham for many years the Catholic centre for a wide circle of towns around it.

II

The one Catholic church in New Hampshire in 1825 was the small brick structure three stories high, but so narrow that it looks almost like a tower, which still stands on the plain of West Claremont today. This church was then unique in New England, and probably in the United States, in that its pastor

¹⁵ Report to Rome of April 24, 1831 (*Guilday Transcripts*, no. 2330).

¹⁶ *Pilot*, Oct. 24, 1840.

¹⁷ *Memoranda*.

¹⁸ The purchase deed is dated Aug. 25, 1830 (*Middlesex Deeds*, book 299, p. 386).

and nearly the whole congregation were native converts to the Faith. It had connected with it the only Catholic school for the higher education of boys that had yet been established in New England. It was also to furnish the one case during these years of a serious setback to the Catholic cause.

The Rev. Virgil Barber's experiment had at first seemed to succeed beyond all expectations. It was a remarkable achievement that within three years, aided by his father's efforts, he had been able to build up a body of about one hundred and fifty converts¹⁹ — a record unequaled in this region, probably, by any other Catholic priest of that period. His academy, in spite of initial local hostility, had quickly gained respect and confidence, thanks to his indubitable talents as an educator: Protestant youths of the neighborhood flocked in in some numbers, and Catholics from more remote quarters — a Walley or a Fitton from Boston, a Cottrill or a Smithwick from Maine. Father Barber had been so much encouraged that in 1824 he was urging not merely the sending of some Jesuits to his assistance, but the establishment of a novitiate in New England, "to which quarter," he wrote, "I am confident, the Society in this country must at last look for its chief support and prosperity, under our good God."²⁰

Nevertheless, he had from the outset to struggle against grave financial difficulties. He had to support not only himself but his aged father, and his congregation was quite too small and too poor to provide much support. The academy was expected to help out in this respect; but experience showed that, at the very low rates which he felt compelled to charge, no real profit was to be made except from boarding-students; and he had not room enough for many of them in the small building erected for their accommodation in 1824.²¹ Unless the school

¹⁹ Since the records of the Claremont Church for that time seem to be lost, it is impossible to be sure of the exact number of these converts. The figure given above is Bishop Fenwick's estimate of the size of the Claremont congregation (*Memoranda*, end of 1825), based, doubtless, upon Father Barber's reports.

²⁰ To Father Dzierozynski, S.J., March 1 and 17, 1824 (*Fordham Arch.*, 206 P 22 and S 9).

²¹ Of the structures used for the Claremont Catholic Academy, St. Mary's

could be developed on a more ample and remunerative scale, it could scarcely be maintained at all. In the autumn of 1825, when Father Barber was about to depart for Bishop Fenwick's consecration at Baltimore, he suspended the academy, and it remained closed for nearly two years. Meanwhile, he was enticed by a new plan: that of transferring his school to the neighboring town of Windsor, Vermont, and expanding it into a college, to be located either in the settled portion of that town — which would be more expensive — or, as he much preferred, high up on the side of Mount Ascutney, where was to be found one of the most magnificent views in the United States. Whether this project originated with him or with citizens of Windsor, eager to make theirs a "college town," is uncertain: at all events, the plan received such strong support within the town as to arouse hopes of obtaining substantial financial backing.

June 2, 1826, Bishop Fenwick arrived in Claremont for the only episcopal visitation outside Boston that he was able to make that year. On Sunday, the 4th, he celebrated Mass and administered Confirmation in the densely packed little church, while a crowd of Protestants filled all the space around, anxious to get a glimpse of the strange Catholic ceremonies. Next day the Bishop, with Father Barber and a company of gentlemen, scaled Mount Ascutney to survey the site of the proposed college. Few incidents are described more fully or more vividly in his journal than that unhappy trip. Ascending on foot in a steep climb, where for most of the way there was neither road nor path through the dense forest and underbrush; scrambling over

Church is all that is left today. This church, erected in 1823, seems to have been built on to Rev. Daniel Barber's dwelling-house. Above the ground floor, used for religious services, were two stories, which contained a study hall and two small classrooms. After his trip to Canada in the winter of 1823-1824 to collect funds, Father Barber added another building for the use of the school, chiefly for the lodging of boarding-students. This structure was connected with the church, and both of them formed wings to Daniel Barber's house. A picture showing the church and "seminary building" is to be found in Rt. Rev. Louis de Goësbrind, *Catholic Memoirs of Vermont and New Hampshire* (Burlington, Vt., 1886), p. 63. The front portions of the dwelling-house were also appropriated for the use of the school, to furnish a refectory, kitchen, etc., Daniel Barber and the rest of his household being relegated to rooms in the rear.

The rates charged at the academy were \$3 per quarter for day-students, and \$1 per week (later raised to \$19.20 per quarter) for boarding-students.

treacherous rocks, mouldering logs, and precipitous cliffs; suffering first from heat and thirst, and later from dampness and cold, the party reached the summit only to find the much-vaunted view ruined by clouds and mist; and they returned home exhausted, footsore, bruised, and chilled. Bishop Fenwick, an extremely stout man, must have suffered more than anyone else. Next day he informed Father Barber in no uncertain terms that he regarded the idea of establishing a college on Ascutney Mountain as "impossible," "preposterous," and "even ridiculous."²² Nevertheless, his net impression of Claremont and its pastor was decidedly favorable. The fervor of these converts, he wrote, "is like that of the first Christians, and recalls to one's mind the primitive days of the Church";²³ and as for the pastor — "I wish I had twenty more like him in my Diocese."²⁴

While Bishop Fenwick had by no means discouraged the founding of a college at Windsor elsewhere than on the mountain, all hopes of this kind were dashed not long after the Bishop's departure, it would seem, when at a public meeting in that town it was after much debate decided not to support the project.²⁵ Obligated to fall back upon the plan of expanding his academy at Claremont, Father Barber spent the second half of the year traveling, largely for the purpose of collecting new funds. At the end of July he visited the Passamaquoddy Indians, of whose wealth he appears to have had exaggerated notions.²⁶ In August and September he was in Canada, in order to be present at his daughter Abigail's reception of the habit in the Ursuline Monastery at Quebec. From October to December, at the Bishop's request, he made a missionary tour which carried him from Dover, New Hampshire, to Bangor, Eastport, and the two Indian settlements of Maine.²⁷ With the money collected on these trips he was able to repair and some-

²² *Memoranda*, June 2-6, 1826.

²³ To Rev. George Fenwick, S.J., July 8, 1826 (*Fordham Arch.*, 207 H 6).

²⁴ To Father Dzierzynski, S.J., June 20, 1826 (*General Archive, Society of Jesus, Rome: Maryl.*, 3 VI).

²⁵ *Vermont Journal*, Sept. 3, 1891.

²⁶ Baptismal register of Pleasant Point, in *Portland Dioc. Arch.*

²⁷ *Memoranda*, Nov. 22, Dec. 11, 1826.

what enlarge his "seminary building," and in June, 1827, the academy was at last reopened. Never were his letters so optimistic as during that spring and summer. The little church was flourishing, new converts were still coming in, the school was going as prosperously as before; and, "Never was the prospect both for the Seminary and the Mission so bright as at present." ²⁸ Thus he wrote just on the eve of the catastrophe.

The primary cause of the Claremont *débâcle* was financial. In the improvements made on the seminary that year Father Barber had incurred debts the payment of which exhausted his resources. The reopening of the school failed to bring the expected relief, for less than twenty students entered (there had once been nearly fifty), and most of these fell away as the pinch of penury made itself felt. As winter approached, with both the treasury and the larder almost bare, the situation was becoming desperate.

Had it been a question only of lack of money, the Bishop or the Society of Jesus would probably have come to the rescue. But, unhappily, there was also another cause of trouble. Great as were the services and the sacrifices of the Barbers for the Church, and much as their names have been held in veneration in the Catholic tradition of New England, it must be admitted that they were a high-strung family, and that even after their conversion they retained a deal of human nature. Their household in 1827 consisted of the Rev. Daniel Barber, his elder son, Truworth, his younger son, Father Virgil, and his daughter, Mrs. Laura McKenna.²⁹ Since early in the year serious and even bitter quarrels had broken out between Virgil, on the one side and his father, supported by Truworth and Laura, on the other — quarrels in which questions of money and property seem to have played a large rôle. Charges and countercharges were spread about, to the shame and indignation of the Catholics, most of whom appear to have stood loyally by their pastor, and to the joy and derision of all unfriendly elements in the com-

²⁸ To Father Dziezozynski, S.J., May 1, June 2, Sept. 12, 1827 (*Fordham Arch.*, 1928 W 5, W 11, T 9).

²⁹ Mrs. Daniel Barber had died, strong in the Catholic faith, February 8, 1825.

munity. There were scandalous scenes, provoked by the hot temper of Truworth Barber. By the end of the year Virgil's position had become so tragic that he wrote to his Superior in Maryland:

Things have now come to the last extremity. I am, and for some time have been, my own woodchopper, washer, and cook. But now my provisions are exhausted, and my money is gone. I suffer abuse from my brother and his family beyond my power to tell, set on by my poor father. I am slandered by them, and they put my safety and life in danger. Unless you aid me, either I must perish by cold and hunger, or by violence, or I must stop the school, and go in quest of something to eat and wear.³⁰

It was in this thoroughly unhappy situation that the Superior of the Jesuits decided, since he could not remove the other Barbers, to recall Father Virgil to Georgetown. In February, 1828, the latter, doubtless with bleeding heart, locked the doors of his church and academy, and departed for the South, despite a protest signed by forty-eight members of the congregation deploring the loss of one whose "usefulness was acknowledged by all" and who "was universally respected."³¹ Bishop Fenwick, who, after hearing Father Barber's story and seeing the documents he brought with him, concluded that he was "one of the most persecuted of men,"³² did bring it about that he was speedily sent back to the Diocese of Boston to serve the Indian missions of Maine. But to Claremont the unfortunate priest was destined never to return except for a couple of brief and almost surreptitious visits.

To the once so promising and interesting flock there his departure was an irremediable blow. Bishop Fenwick, so hard-up for priests, did not feel free to station one permanently with a congregation unable to support him, though he did dispatch a clergyman thither for brief visits once or twice a year to enable

³⁰ To Father Dziezozynski, S.J., Dec. 28, 1827 (*Fordham Arch.*, 208 R 16).

³¹ Catholics of Claremont to Father Dziezozynski, S.J., Feb. 4, 1828 (*ibid.*, 208 P 19).

³² To Father Dziezozynski, S.J., Feb. 21, 1828 (*ibid.*, 208 P 24).

the Catholics to fulfill their religious duties. The Society of Jesus, to which most of the church property in Claremont belonged,³³ was not minded to renew Virgil Barber's experiment. Deprived of a resident pastor, the Claremont congregation slowly melted away. Daniel Barber retired to Maryland in 1831, to spend his last years among hospitable Catholics there, dying at St. Inigoes March 24, 1834. Truworth Barber preceded his father to the grave in 1831.³⁴ Many members of the congregation migrated to the West; others succumbed to the Protestant environment; but not a few appear to the day of their death to have remained true to the faith they had adopted and to the traditions of the venerated Father Barber. Typical of this last group was the excellent Captain Bela Chase, of Cornish, New Hampshire (a cousin of Salmon P. Chase, later Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court), of whom it is related that daily he and his family used to say the rosary together, adding a sixth decade for Father Barber, while on Sundays they recited the entire catechism and sang the *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Credo*, and *Sanctus* of the High Mass, in order to keep fresh in mind their beloved Catholic faith and customs during the long winter of the priestless time.³⁵

III

Meanwhile, better things were happening in eastern New Hampshire and in Maine, along that route of the Northern Missions which Bishop Cheverus had traversed almost annually during a quarter of a century. Here Catholic growth was to be expected, not only because of the new industrialism, the opening-up of new areas for farming and the development of

³³ Daniel Barber, by a deed of June 7, 1824, had conveyed to the Society his dwelling-house and the land attached, on which the church and academy stood, subject to certain rights reserved for life to his son Truworth, and excepting a small lot which he had already donated to Bishop Cheverus in 1822 — the present cemetery alongside St. Mary's Church (*Cheshire County Registry of Probate*, book 96, p. 411).

³⁴ His last will and testament is dated Feb. 9, 1831 (copy furnished from the *Sullivan County Registry of Probate*).

³⁵ Writings of Sister Josephine Barber, in the archives of the Visitation Convent, St. Louis, describing a visit to Cornish in 1830.

lumbering, but because Maine during the 1820's was increasing more rapidly in population than any other State of New England, and because most of the Irish immigrants coming to New England then entered by way of New Brunswick, and many of them lingered and settled along the Maine coast. Apart from the two Indian tribes, the chief scene of Catholic activity in this region had hitherto been in central Maine, in the district between the lower Kennebec and Penobscot Bay, around the two churches of Newcastle (Damariscotta) and Whitefield, and the score or more of missionary stations which Bishop Cheverus and Father Romagné had so assiduously attended (Hallowell, Gardiner, Bath, Waldoboro, Bristol, etc.). These missions Father Dennis Ryan continued to serve, quietly and faithfully, throughout the Fenwick period. The new centres growing up in the years 1825 to 1830 lay considerably to the east or the west of these old centres: at Eastport and Portland, Maine, and at Dover, New Hampshire.

Eastport, though still a town of only about two thousand people, was going through something of a boom, thanks to the growth since 1821 of shipbuilding and the shipping trade, both foreign and domestic. The small colony of Irish Catholics which had formed there seems to have entered into communication with Bishop Fenwick as soon as he came to Boston, doubtless for the purpose of obtaining a priest. At Portland, the Maine metropolis, which grew from eight thousand to twelve thousand people during the decade, the forty-three Catholics, who invited Cheverus to visit them in 1822, had increased to one hundred and twenty-five by 1827, and to two hundred by 1830.³⁶ Unusually poor as most of these pioneers seem to have been, they had long rented an upper room in a building adjacent to the Museum, on Market Square, where they met for public prayer on Sundays; they had been attended occasionally, since Bishop Cheverus' visit, by Father Ryan; and both their faith and their numbers suggested the need of a resident priest. The old town of Dover, with its abundant

³⁶ "The Catholic Church in Southwestern Maine," *Sacred Heart Review*, XVI (July 4, 1896), 21.

water-power on the Cocheco and Salmon Rivers, had witnessed such a sudden growth of cotton, woolen, carpet, and iron manufactures as doubled its population in a decade (5,449 by 1830), and made it the foremost industrial centre in New Hampshire. Since 1819 a group of about twenty Irish immigrants had gathered here, most of them employed in the mills: an unusually devout little band, accustomed from the first to meet weekly in each other's homes for religious exercises, and also, it would seem, rather more well-to-do than most similar groups. From 1825 on they were continually begging that a priest be sent to them.³⁷

Almost from the moment of his arrival in Boston, Bishop Fenwick appears to have been deeply concerned over the large number of Catholics scattered unshepherded in these communities to the northward, and he resolved to meet their needs as soon as possible. His first effort to explore the situation was the sending of Rev. Virgil Barber on that missionary tour to the East which has already been mentioned. When that good father arrived at Dover, the Catholics from far and near gathered to welcome him, so overjoyed that at last a priest had come to them that, we are told, "the crowd stayed all night."³⁸ Sunday, October 22, 1826, he said the first Mass in that town in the Court House before a dense throng of all denominations, preaching a "luminous and eloquent discourse,"³⁹ which so impressed the Protestants that at their request he preached there again in the afternoon. It is said that the Congregational meeting-house across the street was deserted that afternoon, as first the congregation and then the minister and deacon streamed over to hear Father Barber.⁴⁰ Wherever the missionary passed, it

³⁷ The beginnings of Catholicity in Dover are much better recorded than in most localities. See especially: "The Catholic Church in Southeastern New Hampshire," *Sacred Heart Review*, XVIII, no. 22 (Nov. 27, 1897), suppl., pp. 1 ff.; Mary A. Spellissy, "Sketch of the Life of Philip Francis Scanlan (1794-1880)," *U.S. Cath. Hist. Soc., Records and Studies*, XI (1900), 385-417 (a biography of one of the leading Catholic laymen of Dover, which is based on his personal papers, including letters of Bishop Fenwick, and which makes one sigh that we have not more such sketches of the Irish Catholic pioneers of New England).

³⁸ *Sacred Heart Review*, *loc. cit.*

³⁹ Letter from Dover, in *New England Palladium*, Oct. 27, 1826.

⁴⁰ Spellissy, *op. cit.*, p. 396, confirmed in large part by Bishop Fenwick's *Memoranda*, Dec. 11, 1826.

seems to have been the same story: crowds of Catholics, long famished for the ministrations of their Church, delighted again to hear Holy Mass, to approach the Sacraments, to listen to the eloquent and dignified vindication of their faith, and eager henceforth not to be without those consolations. The Bishop wrote: "He [Father Barber] has done immense good. I have received many letters from the different parts through which he passed, begging me to let him remain with them, promising to build churches, to support him, in short to do anything. He has excited a very good sensation."⁴¹

Father Barber could not be spared from Claremont, but the first two priests who became available were quickly dispatched to the eastward. The first was Father Charles Ffrench, who, arriving in Boston in November, 1826, was at once sent down to Eastport, both because of the importance of that gateway to New England and the need of safeguarding the neighboring Indians against a danger to be described a little later. The second priest, Rev. Francis Boland, received into the Diocese from Charleston in January, 1827, was assigned to serve both Dover and Saco, Maine. In this latter town there were but a handful of Catholics — two distinguished converts, Dr. Henry B. C. Greene and his friend, Jonathan Tucker, and a few Irish laborers; but it was presumed that a large industrial enterprise just being started there would attract many immigrants. Father Boland, unfortunately, conducted himself in such a manner that he very quickly had to be recalled and dismissed.

By the summer of 1827, Bishop Fenwick was at last free to commence the visitation of his vast Diocese, to give Confirmation and to inspect the needs of each community. He began with a voyage to the eastward (July 10th to August 20th), which is very fully narrated in his *Memoranda* and has been described at some length by most of those who have written about him. At Eastport he encouraged the Catholics to buy a lot for a church, and, by invitation, "delivered in the Congregational (Unitarian) meeting-house, before a crowded and most respectable assemblage of citizens, an impressive and most elegant

⁴¹ To Father Dzierozynski, S.J., Dec. 26, 1826 (*Fordham Arch.*, 207 F 11).

discourse.”⁴² At Belfast we find him wandering through the streets looking for Catholics; pursuing a resentful Irish woman who took him for a minister, to “Paddy McGann’s garrett”; finding there a group of newly arrived immigrants, sick, hungry, and forlorn, to whom he gave food, money, practical advice, and spiritual aid in a way that turned a scene of mourning into one of hope and joy — in short, in this Belfast episode we have an example of Bishop Fenwick’s pastoral zeal that deserves to be set alongside the many similar tales of Bishop Cheverus. At Portland he gathered the Catholics in their upper room, which, as he says, “had a very poor appearance and bespoke at once the poverty of the Catholics in this place,” but “reminded one of the upper chamber spoken of in the Acts of the Apostles,”⁴³ and urged them to start a subscription for the purpose of buying a lot and building a church. In Saco he said the first Mass in Dr. Greene’s parlor, and preached in the “Episcopalian Hall . . . crowded to an excess.”⁴⁴ At Dover he said Mass before forty to fifty Catholics in Mr. Burns’ house, and exhorted them, by subscribing one dollar per month apiece, to form a fund for starting a church. Fruitful in many ways as this tour had been, its most immediate result was that, upon his return to Boston, the Bishop wrote Father Ffrench a letter, “in which he informed him of the destitute condition of the Catholics at Portland and Dover and directed him, as soon as he conveniently could, to visit them and use all his endeavours to have a Church erected at each of the above places,” stating, furthermore, “the favourable dispositions of the Catholics in them and their great desire to have these objects accomplished.”⁴⁵

To be charged with a mission extending from Eastport to Dover, and with the task of simultaneously building three churches under the given conditions, was a prospect that might have daunted even a bold priest. But Father Ffrench had had an even vaster mission on his hands and more churches to build in New Brunswick; and he was not the kind of man to be

⁴² *Eastport Sentinel*, quoted in William H. Kilby, *Eastport and Passamaquoddy* (Eastport, 1888), p. 351.

⁴³ *Memoranda*, Aug. 9, 1827.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, Aug. 13.

⁴⁵ *Memoirs*.

daunted. Attacking his problems with great vigor, he quickly made the two-hundred-and-fifty-mile circuit of his "parish," and within a month he appeared in Boston to report that he had opened subscriptions in Eastport, Portland, and Dover, and had contracted for church lots in Eastport and Saco.⁴⁶ After three months spent in collecting funds from the Catholics of Boston, he returned to his mission; before the end of the year the ground on which the present St. Mary's Church stands was purchased from the Dover Manufacturing Company; and shortly afterwards a very desirable lot on State Street, in Portland, was bought from John Fox, a broad-minded Protestant, who not only braved considerable opposition in selling land to Catholics, but added a generous donation for building a church. In the spring, Father Ffrench could proceed to a series of cornerstone layings: at Eastport, April 29th; at Dover, May 14th; at Portland June 13th. Construction was then pressed so vigorously that before the end of 1828 all three churches were far enough along to allow Mass to be said in them.⁴⁷ The Portland and Dover churches were of about the same size (50 by 40 feet and 50 by 36 respectively), and of Gothic style; but the former, a brick church, was considerably the more pretentious and expensive. For Eastport a simple frame building, 50 by 32 feet, seemed sufficient. Rectories were being built alongside all three churches. At Saco alone no construction was in prospect. The Catholics there did not increase in number, and a great fire which destroyed the town's chief manufacturing plant (early in 1830) also destroyed hopes that they would increase. The lot bought for a church was to remain untenanted until in 1847 Bishop Fitzpatrick sold it.

While progress at the other three places had at first been so rapid, the final completion of those churches and the payment of the debts contracted for them were still to require much time and trouble. Again and again Father Ffrench appealed to the Catholics of Boston, who contributed, in all, \$2,926; ⁴⁸

⁴⁶ *Memoranda*, Sept. 24, 1827.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, Nov. 20, 1828. The dates connected with the purchase of the lots, the laying of the cornerstones, and the opening of these churches for worship, have been reported inaccurately by most writers who have touched upon this subject.

⁴⁸ This sum represents the total sum raised from four collections in Boston, in

Protestants gave generously — those of Portland, for instance, \$387;⁴⁹ the local Catholics doubtless did their best; but the simultaneous carrying through of these three projects remained an audacious venture. Things went most smoothly at Dover, where Bishop Fenwick dedicated St. Aloysius' Church on September 26, 1830. Two months later this church, detached from Father Ffrench's mission, received its own pastor in the person of Rev. Michael Healy; and in two years more it was almost out of debt. At Eastport, however, a business depression and lack of employment so affected the little group of Catholics that for years matters dragged badly. Not until July 19, 1835, was St. Joseph's Church dedicated; and long after that the congregation still owed over eleven hundred dollars to "poor Gilligan," the zealous carpenter who had built the church and rectory.⁵⁰ Already in 1834 this church, too, received its own resident pastor.

At Portland, which Father Ffrench had made his chief base of operations from 1828 on, and where he attempted to do things on the largest scale, he also experienced the most difficulties. The total cost of lot, church, and rectory there ran to nearly seven thousand dollars — a formidable sum for a congregation of only a few hundred very poor Catholics. The frequent, though probably necessary, absences of their pastor aroused outspoken discontent among the people, so much so that towards the end of 1830 the Bishop himself felt obliged to go to Portland and serve for a month as parish priest. St. Dominic's Church was finally dedicated on August 11, 1833. But this had been made possible only by Father Ffrench advancing over three thousand dollars, a sum which he obtained by sacrificing his farm in New Brunswick; and this debt the congregation continued to owe him for many a long year. Nevertheless, in spite of all financial worries and passing misunderstandings, during the decade of his pastorate at Portland (1828-1838) he accomplished a great and fruitful work; and 1827, 1828, 1829, and 1833 (*Pilot*, Oct. 20, 1838), and not the sum raised on Father Ffrench's first collecting tour in 1827, as has commonly been stated.

⁴⁹ *Memoranda*, May 17, 1838.

⁵⁰ Father Ffrench to Bishop Fenwick, June 29, 1837 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

residents long delighted to tell of the genial and gentle manners which made him a universal favorite in the community, despite the prejudices of those days.⁵¹

IV

Objects of special concern to Bishop Fenwick during those years were the two small communities which represented the oldest Catholic stock of New England: the Penobscot Indians, settled at Oldtown Island, a little above Bangor; and the Passamaquoddy Indians, whose chief centre was, and is, at Pleasant Point, near Eastport. Including about four hundred souls apiece, these tribes were at least no longer declining in numbers. Both still owned considerable tracts of land, valuable for timber or, potentially, for agriculture; yet both were miserably poor. The State of Maine, which essayed to act as their guardian, from the revenues of their lands or in virtue of obligations arising from old treaties, doled out to them just enough to maintain a bare existence, and occasionally some special boon which, according to the somewhat capricious views of the State authorities, was thought to be for the best interests of their protégés. More and more the Indians found themselves engulfed by white settlements, their chances of gaining a livelihood by hunting and fishing imperiled, all their old ways of life and thought affected by the increasing impact of a civilization in most respects superior to theirs. In a more acute form than ever the two tribes faced the problems: of going over to agriculture and a more settled kind of existence; of adopting from the white man's civilization what was useful and necessary; of fighting off the white man's vices, especially drunkenness; and of preserving, against a hostile environment, that religion to which their fathers had clung for two and a half centuries with such unsurpassed fidelity, and which had furnished the greatest spiritual consolation and moral safeguard that these sons of the forest had ever known.

⁵¹ Bishop Healy, in *1786-1886. Centennial Celebration . . . of Portland* (Portland, 1886), p. 132.

From 1799 to 1820 the Indians had enjoyed the privilege of having a resident Catholic pastor, who received a salary from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. But when, after the Separation Act, their delegates appeared at Portland to ask aid to support a priest from the Government of the new State of Maine, they were roundly rebuffed, and were offered a school, instead, which they indignantly declined (February, 1821). For some years thereafter, although the Indians were constantly writing to Boston for a "patriarch" (resident pastor), they received only brief, annual visits from a priest (Father Byrne, 1822-1825; Father Barber in 1826). With a vacuum thus created, Protestant missionaries hastened to rush in. Countless attempts have been made to draw the Maine Indians away from Catholicism, but at no other period in their history has so protracted and persistent an effort been made as was then undertaken by the Rev. Elijah Kellogg, who subjected the Passamaquoddies to a systematic, ten-years' siege.

This protagonist ⁵² in the little drama about to be narrated was a soldier of the American Revolution, a graduate of Dartmouth, and a Congregational minister who had long held a fairly eminent position in Portland until unfortunate speculations in real estate and other financial troubles impaired that

⁵² Rev. Elijah Kellogg was born at South Hadley, Mass., Aug. 17, 1761. After serving as a youth in the American army, he worked his way through Dartmouth, graduating in 1785; then studied Divinity for a few years, and in 1788 was ordained minister of the Second Congregational Society in Portland. Brilliantly successful for a time and famed for his eloquence and zeal, he "lost his popularity and influence by engaging in speculations outside of his profession" (William Willis, *The History of Portland from 1632 to 1864*: 2nd ed.; Portland, 1865, p. 648, note). Dismissed by his parish in 1811, he then organized a secessionist group into the Chapel Congregational Society, of which, amid constant financial worries, he remained minister down to 1821, after which he held no settled position down to his death in 1842.

For the history of Kellogg's enterprise with the Passamaquoddies, I have used especially: his voluminous correspondence with the Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Indians and Others in North America, which is preserved in the archives of that Society and was made accessible to me through the kindness of the present Secretary of the Society, the Rev. Dr. Charles E. Park; the *Reports of the Select Committee* and the *Discourses before the Society* published by this organization for many of the years in question; the annual printed *Reports of the Massachusetts Missionary Society*; and the correspondence of Mr. Kellogg with the Federal Indian Office, preserved in the National Archives at Washington.

position and lost him his congregation. Turning back, then, from the disappointments of the world to ministerial tasks with a renewal of fervor, he began to devote most of his time to missionary work in eastern Maine. His labors there were subsidized for about a decade both by the (Boston) Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Indians and Others in North America, an organization controlled by Unitarians, and the Massachusetts Missionary Society, a Congregationalist body. In 1821 he began to interest himself in the Passamaquoddy tribe. Finding these Indians "locked up in ignorance, and the key of knowledge taken from them," he felt "a special call in Providence . . . to come over and help them"; "an unconquerable desire to effect a lodgment" among them, and to "deal out the bread of charity, instruction, and civilization to these abused natives even in the sacred enclosure not to be trodden by Protestant foot."⁵³ For two years he toiled assiduously to win the confidence of the Indians, to open to them the Scriptures, to teach them "vital religion," to induce them to accept his prayers and ministrations, to spread among them the idea of having a school, with himself as teacher. Undismayed by constant rebuffs, he at last gained one ally who was to be invaluable — the chief commonly known as "Deacon Sock Bason."⁵⁴

This was certainly the most active and self-assertive, and perhaps the most intelligent and influential, man of the tribe. A son-in-law of the aged Governor Francis Joseph Neptune, a Councilor, the one man in the tribe who could read and write English — after a fashion; and therefore always the leader in embassies to Portland and elsewhere; fierce champion of his people's rights, yet readiest of all to adopt the white man's ways; reformer and rum-seller; professed Catholic, and often a rebel against ecclesiastical authority; strutting around in startling clothes intended to emphasize his dignity and importance, Sock

⁵³ These phrases are taken from his letter to Rev. Abiel Holmes, July 7, 1827, and his main report for 1827, in the archives of the Society for Propagating the Gospel.

⁵⁴ "Deacon" was the title of certain officers in the tribe who were half church sextons and half community police. "Sock Bason" was the Indian form of the French name Jacques Vincent.

Bason was a curious and original figure, a potent personage, and something of a speckled bird.

At first "mad for a priest," and crouching "like Cerberus" at the gates to repel Kellogg's invasion, "the Deacon" allowed himself to be won over by that adroit missionary through a grant of land and farming utensils — the first of a long series of State bounties obtained for him, which turned him into an enthusiastic champion, and the "shield and buckler" of the minister's enterprise. At the January session of the Maine Legislature, in 1823, Sock Bason yielded, therefore, to the demand of the State authorities, and agreed that the tribe should accept a school taught by Mr. Kellogg; with the understanding that the State would grant special favors in return, and that when the minister was tired of conducting the school, he would be replaced by a Catholic priest as teacher.⁵⁵ The legislation promised was then quickly passed: a grant of fifty dollars a year for the needy members of the Passamaquoddy tribe, and of one hundred and fifty dollars a year "for the improvement and instruction of said Indians in the English language, and for their encouragement and assistance in agriculture."⁵⁶ Application for further aid was made by the Governor of Maine to the Federal Indian Office, which since 1819 disposed of a "Civilization Fund" of ten thousand dollars a year, for the benefit of the Indians — a fund which was then being distributed almost exclusively to Congregationalist and Baptist missionary societies. From this source a grant for building a school and an annual subsidy of two hundred and fifty dollars a year were easily obtained. Next year (1824) "Quoddy School" was erected, and the Rev. Elijah Kellogg now found himself in a long desired and fairly strong position. He was set over the Indians as their official instructor by both the Federal and the State Governments, and supplied with funds by both those Governments as well as by two missionary societies. He had money to hand out to all the sick or indigent members of the tribe;

⁵⁵ Retrospective letters of Sock Bason to Kellogg, Nov. 11, 1828 (*Arch., Soc. for Propagating the Gospel*), and Kellogg to McKenney, Nov. 16, 1828 (*National Archives, Records of the Dept. of the Interior, Office of Indian Affairs*).

⁵⁶ *Resolves of Maine, 1823*, chapter XXXIX.

milk for all who called for it; clothing for all the children who would attend his school; and premiums for those who, in Sock Bason's phrase, were willing to "raise potatoes and be civilized." Such inducements were not to be despised; and although the Indians were full of qualms and fears, their children began fitfully to attend the school.

That the ultimate aim of Mr. Kellogg's enterprise was to proselyte the tribe is scarcely open to serious doubt. In dealing with the Catholic clergy he was, indeed, accustomed to declare that he was among the Indians only as a school teacher and never meddled with religious matters; but his correspondence bristles with proofs to the contrary. He sometimes defended himself by pleading that he never attacked the Catholic religion or its forms of worship — and this may be believed, for it would have been highly imprudent for him to act otherwise. But his letters and reports clearly show his constant effort to persuade the Indians that his religion was just as good as the Catholic one, and his hope that ultimately they would conclude that it was very much better. His method was that of undermining rather than frontal attack. Of his fundamental hostility to "Popery," there can be no question. It was, he declared, a degrading superstition;⁵⁷ its clergy were "wolves among my sheep and lambs";⁵⁸ it was necessary "to save, if possible, the Indians themselves from the perdition that awaits the Beast."⁵⁹ No one need doubt the sincerity of his convictions, but it would be difficult to defend the honesty of his methods.

Not unnaturally, the Catholic clergy took alarm, the more so as a similar enterprise had been started at Oldtown. Early in 1823, under the leadership of certain professors in the Bangor Theological Seminary (Congregationalist), there was formed the Society for the Benefit of the Penobscot Indians, which for two years attempted to conduct among that tribe a school which had openly a proselyting character and which

⁵⁷ Letter to Alden Bradford, July 12, 1829 (*Arch., Soc. for Propagating the Gospel*).

⁵⁸ To Rev. Abiel Holmes, Oct. —, 1827 (*ibid.*).

⁵⁹ *Annual Report of the Massachusetts Missionary Society* (Salem, 1829), p. 16.

Indian children were paid for attending, at the rate of fifty cents a week per child.⁶⁰ Before this school had made much headway, however, or secured government aid, Father Byrne was able to persuade the Penobscots to refuse very decisively to tolerate it any longer in their midst (July, 1825), thus, in effect, ending the whole enterprise. At Pleasant Point, on the other hand, he was less successful: that problem was left to Bishop Fenwick.

Assailed from the moment he arrived in Boston with contradictory accounts of the Kellogg school, the Bishop at first took the line that the school was to be accepted as long as its teacher confined himself to his proper task, but not to be permitted if he meddled with religion. During his tour of Maine in the summer of 1827, the Bishop made lengthy visits to both the Indian tribes; received with all honors and with the most touching signs of reverent affection, administering Confirmation, spending endless hours in the confessional, blessing marriages, reforming moral delinquents, examining into the whole situation of the Indians, conceiving an ever deeper love and concern for his simple, faithful, and in many ways abused, red children. But his contacts with the Rev. Mr. Kellogg were evidently tragic. Convinced, after an examination of the school, that its much-subsidized teacher was perfectly useless as such, and exasperated by what he considered the hypocrisy of a man who pretended to be merely a schoolmaster and yet, in the last published report of one of his missionary societies, described at much length his religious activities as "missionary to the Passamaquoddies," Bishop Fenwick upbraided him severely and warned him that he would do everything in his power to have him turned out unless he confined himself henceforth to his duties as teacher. There is hardly another passage in his journals in which the usually mild and patient Bishop shows himself so stirred with indignation.⁶¹ Sock Bason was also roundly taken to task, but not brought to repentance.

⁶⁰ Daniel Pike, Secretary of the Society, to Samuel Call, Indian Agent, April 5, 1824 (*National Archives, loc. cit.*).

⁶¹ Bishop Fenwick narrates his stormy meeting with Kellogg at much length in both his *Memoirs* and his *Memoranda* (July 17, 1827). Kellogg's reports are rather reticent about the incident, though adding a few details.

Obviously, it was time for a new departure in dealing with the Indians. The Catholic Church must take their education in hand. For that purpose Bishop Fenwick framed a comprehensive program, which, during his stay at Portland in August, he laid before Governor Lincoln, and which, in the following January, he submitted in writing to the Maine Legislature. In this able memorial he announced his intention to furnish the Indians with a resident priest who, in addition to his religious duties, would at once open a school in each tribe, and would devote the bulk of his time to the education of their youth and to arousing interest and emulation in agriculture. He urged that no teacher would ever succeed among the Indians who was not of their religious faith and whose intentions they distrusted; but that the best results might be hoped for from a school conducted by their pastor, who would have their reverent respect and perfect confidence. But in order to make this program possible, it would be necessary to build a school-house at Oldtown, and to repair or replace the churches and presbyteries, which were fast falling into ruins in both the Indian villages; and for these purposes he begged financial aid from the State.⁶²

It was the first time that the Catholic Church had sought assistance from the new Commonwealth of Maine, and it is not surprising, perhaps, that only a half-success was achieved. The State authorities were far too deeply enlisted in favor of Mr. Kellogg's enterprise to be willing to do anything for Catholic interests at Passamaquoddy. The Legislature did vote a grant of twelve hundred dollars for a new church at Oldtown (to be paid for out of the Indians' money: out of sales of timber from their land), and also five hundred dollars to build a school and storehouse at the same place; but it passed over the rest of the Bishop's proposals.⁶³

Encouraged, none the less, in May Bishop Fenwick dispatched two priests to Maine to carry through the new policy.

⁶² Memorial of Bishop Fenwick to the Senate and House of Representatives, Jan. 23, 1828 (*Maine State Archives, Laws of 1828*, doc. no. 433).

⁶³ *Public Acts of Maine, 1828*, chapter 392.

The one was Father Virgil Barber, who, after his recall from Claremont to Georgetown in January, was quickly sent back at the Bishop's request to serve the Penobscot Indians. The other was the newly ordained Father Smith, assigned to the difficult post with the Passamaquoddies.

The ensuing events at this latter mission are not easy to understand, especially since we have detailed reports from only one side — the Reverend Mr. Kellogg. It is clear that both priests — for Father Barber quickly came on to aid his younger colleague — arrived expecting that "Quoddy School" would now be turned over to them. This expectation was probably based on the fact that the Indians, for whose benefit the school was supposed to exist, strongly desired such a change. Already in March, and twice later in the year, the tribe wrote to Washington to say that they had religious scruples against sending their children to Mr. Kellogg, who, besides, was useless as a teacher and had lost all their confidence: they desired only a teacher of their own faith.⁶⁴ But to such appeals the Federal Indian Office returned only the almost whimsical answer that in the name of religious liberty (its own freedom to appoint officials without regard to creed) it must insist that the Catholic Indians keep the Protestant minister (whom in the name of religious liberty they were eager to get rid of).⁶⁵ Meanwhile, the doughty Kellogg refused either to resign his position or to evacuate the schoolhouse; and, legally, he had a fairly strong case. The building belonged to the United States Government; he had been hired by that Government and by the State to instruct the Indians; and his commission had never been revoked. For some weeks there was a deadlock and a sharp crisis. Finally (some time in July) the two priests came with a party of Indians, filled the little schoolhouse, and encamped there, making all teaching impossible, until Kellogg, with angry protests, retired beaten from the field.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Petitions of the Passamaquoddy Indians, March 10, July 15, Oct. 7, 1828 (*National Archives*).

⁶⁵ Col. Thomas McKenney to the Governor of the tribe, Aug. 12, 1828 (*ibid.*).

⁶⁶ Kellogg to Rev. Abiel Holmes, Oct. 10, 1828; his report for the year, dated March 9, 1829; Sock Bason to Kellogg, Nov. 11, 1828 (*Arch., Soc. for Propagating the Gospel*); Bishop Fenwick's *Memoranda*, Aug. 1, 1828; letter of Father Barber in the *Bangor Eastern Republican*, Dec. 9, 1828.

How far this *coup-de-main* of Fathers Barber and Smith may be regarded as either justifiable or successful is something of an open question. The Indian Office and the Governor of Maine condemned it, and as a consequence withdrew their aid from "Quoddy School";⁶⁷ but they did nothing further to reinstate the ejected teacher. For the rest of the year there were rival schools at Pleasant Point. The great majority of the children attended that in the schoolhouse, which was kept, first, by Father Smith, and then by his successor, the young Father Fitton. Mr. Kellogg still taught a few youngsters in the house of Sock Bason. At the end of the year both schools were discontinued. The Protestant missionary, discouraged and apparently abandoned by almost everyone, departed with the announcement that he was relinquishing his school forever. Father Fitton was recalled to Boston, apparently because Father Byrne was going to Europe for a year, and there was no one else to replace him at the Cathedral.

In 1829, therefore, the Passamaquoddies reflected with some bitterness that, as a result of having followed the advice of their priests the year before, they now found themselves without either priest or school or all those material benefits which the Rev. Mr. Kellogg as "the almoner of both governments" had formerly showered upon them. When that gentleman returned to spend the summer with them simply as a missionary, a reaction started in his favor. By October, Sock Bason was able to win the tribal council to the compromise plan of asking their Great White Father to give them both a priest and Mr. Kellogg once more as schoolmaster. The Deacon and another partisan of his then went to Washington, where they were cordially received by President Andrew Jackson and succeeded almost completely in the purpose of their embassy. The arrangement arrived at was very artfully framed by Sock Bason (and probably concerted in advance with Kellogg). The Federal Government agreed to pay three hundred dollars a year for the civilization of the tribe; Mr. Kellogg was to handle these funds, as also to renew his school and to foster the development of agriculture;

⁶⁷ To Rev. Abiel Holmes, Oct. 10, 1828; report of March 9, 1829 (see *supra*).

and half of the sum allotted was, *if the Indians desired it*, to be paid to a Catholic priest who might come to serve as their spiritual guide.⁶⁸

In June, 1830, then, the erstwhile vanquished Kellogg returned in triumph to resume his old position. A month later there arrived the only priest whom Bishop Fenwick could send to meet this revived peril, the newly ordained Father Michael Healy. The new and final contest that ensued takes on a somewhat humorous aspect from the fact that the authorities at Washington had made the Protestant minister the paymaster of his prospective rival, the Catholic priest, and had also left the priest's salary dependent on the wishes of the Indians. The sequel can easily be imagined. The moment Father Healy began to oppose the school (and indeed long before that), Kellogg urged upon the council of the tribe that the priest's wages should be cut in half, and the residue divided among the Indians, ostensibly in order to repay them for the expense of their pastor's board. Delighted with this luminous idea, and with the prospect, also held out to them, of getting the whole hundred and fifty dollars into their hands next year, if no priest was sent to them, the council voted as Kellogg had proposed, and now ranged themselves strongly on the minister's side against their own priest.⁶⁹ Bishop Fenwick, growing impatient, instructed Father Healy to declare that unless the tribe rejected this minister as their schoolmaster, he, their priest, must at once return to Boston. With this ultimatum, the tribal council refused to comply. In November Father Healy departed, apparently defeated, and it was to be long before another priest was sent to the Passamaquoddies.

Nevertheless, Kellogg also retired shortly afterwards equally vanquished. He might have won over the political leaders of the tribe by strictly political methods, but what defeated him was the fidelity of the rank and file of the Indians to their religion. During this season his scholars had shrunk to a mere

⁶⁸ McKenney to Sock Bason and Sabbatis Neptune, Dec. 14, 1829 (*National Archives*).

⁶⁹ Kellogg to Secretary of War Eaton, Aug. 9, 1830; to S. S. Hamilton, Sept. 25 (*National Archives*).

handful. Disheartened by this experience, more and more convinced that nothing was to be effected here in the face of steady Catholic opposition, and somewhat broken in health, he left Pleasant Point at the end of 1830, never to return, except for one or two brief, casual visits. It was the end of an enterprise in which he had labored with unsurpassed perseverance to open to Protestantism "a door for a mission, which had been shut for ages."⁷⁰

During these years of combat among the Passamaquoddies, the Rev. Virgil Barber had been proceeding peacefully and prosperously with his mission among the Penobscots. The school which he at once opened up did much to justify Bishop Fenwick's prophecies to the Maine Legislature. Thirty years later a missionary to this tribe could still distinguish the superior accomplishments of those Indians who had been taught by Father Barber, "whose memory," he adds, "remains in benediction amongst them."⁷¹ The new church, provided for by the Legislature in 1828, was finished the following year: a handsome and commodious wooden church painted white, whose steeple dominated the little village. The Penobscots for some time had been advancing in civilization more rapidly than the other tribe, but in these years the change — from hunting to farming, from wigwams to frame houses, from intemperance to sobriety — was particularly marked; and much of this improvement must have been due to Father Barber's influence and his lively concern for all the affairs of his flock. His zeal for their interests, unfortunately, involved him in a long controversy with the State's Agent for the Penobscot Tribe (Samuel F. Hussey); and the latter's opposition may have had much to do with the fact that Father Barber's frequent journeys to Portland to obtain from the State favors or justice for the Indians remained comparatively fruitless. It was a still greater misfortune for the Indians that in the summer of 1830 their pastor, who had merely been loaned to the Maine missions for a time, was

⁷⁰ This phrase occurs in his letter to Rev. Abiel Holmes, of July 7, 1827 (*Arch., Soc. for Propagating the Gospel*).

⁷¹ Rev. Eugene Vetromile, *The Abnakis and Their History* (New York, 1866), p. 102.

recalled by the Superior of the Jesuits to Maryland, while Bishop Fenwick had no one to replace him. Thus both tribes were left without a priest, and while the Protestant attack had been repelled, the Bishop's new Indian policy of 1828 was brought, for the time being, to a standstill.

CHAPTER IV

THE CHURCH EXTENDED TO ALL THE NEW ENGLAND STATES — II (1825-1830)

I

ALTHOUGH THE MISSIONS of southern New England had been visited by Father Matignon and Bishop Cheverus almost as frequently as the northern ones, still in 1825 in the whole region south of Boston there was but one Catholic church: what Fenwick called the "pitiful little building" ¹ at New Bedford. Nowhere else, however, was the new industrialism making more rapid progress than in Rhode Island and southeastern Massachusetts; and everywhere its concomitant was Irish immigration.

Providence during this decade turned from commerce to manufacturing, and, with nearly seventeen thousand inhabitants by 1830, leaped into the rank of second largest city in New England. Pawtucket, though only a village of a few thousand people, had been a pioneer in the iron and textile industries, and, possessing better water-power than Providence, aspired to metropolitan importance.² Newport, with eight thousand inhabitants but no industry, grew scarcely at all; but the reconstruction of Fort Adams, begun in 1825, gave employment to nearly three hundred, mostly Irish, laborers, while the coal mines fitfully worked in the neighboring town of Portsmouth drew many other sturdy immigrants. Up the Blackstone Valley and the new Blackstone Canal a line of mill-towns

¹ *Memoranda*, Aug. 14, 1841.

² There were, as a matter of fact, two Pawtuckets at that time: the Rhode Island one, which formed a village in the town of North Providence; and the Massachusetts one, incorporated as the Town of Pawtucket in 1828. Down to 1861 the Blackstone or Seekonk River, which now bisects the city of Pawtucket, was the boundary between the two States.

was arising, including, notably, the village of Woonsocket. Worcester, at the head of the canal, with a population of four thousand in 1830, was striving to transform itself from a country market-town into the commercial and industrial metropolis of central Massachusetts.

In the southeastern part of the Commonwealth Taunton, with five to six thousand inhabitants, claimed first rank as a hive of the new industry, especially since the foundation in 1823 of the Taunton Manufacturing Company, whose immense plant, and whose print works in particular, employed not a few Irish Catholics. Fall River, with its unusual combination of excellent hydraulic power and a situation upon navigable waters, was adding a cotton, a woolen, a rolling mill almost yearly, and was as large as Worcester. New Bedford, the capital of the whaling industry, with seven thousand inhabitants, boasted of being the richest community of its size in the world; but with few factories, it offered no great attractions to immigrants. It was in 1825 that Deming Jarves began at Sandwich the manufacture of glass which made the name of that village famous around the world. The operatives were largely recruited from the Irish glassblowers of East Cambridge. About a score of Catholic families thus came to settle in the community on the Cape, which at the moment seemed destined to a great industrial future.³

Conditions were thus at last ripening for the definitive establishment of the Church in southeastern New England. Bishop Fenwick appears, however, to have been somewhat slow to realize this. During his first two years in Boston he confined himself, as Bishop Cheverus and Father Taylor had done in recent years, to sending Father Byrne to Rhode Island for occasional brief visits. That priest, as the register of baptisms of the Boston Cathedral shows, officiated at Pawtucket and at "Smithfield, on the Canals" (Woonsocket?), on February 14, 1826; at Providence and Portsmouth on April 11-12, 1826; and at Newport and Portsmouth on January 30-31, 1827. From this

³ Rev. Raymond B. Bourgoïn, *The Catholic Church in Sandwich, 1830-1930* (Boston, 1930), p. 6.

last visit he brought back a highly encouraging report as to the unexpectedly large number of Catholics he had found employed at Fort Adams and at the coal mines: about one hundred and fifty persons had approached the Sacraments at the one place, and twenty to thirty at the other.⁴ Nine months later the Bishop's interest was still further aroused when James Lenox, a resident of Pawtucket, called upon him and informed him that "the number of Catholics in or near that village has considerably increased and amounts now to two or three hundred souls, who are very anxious to have a small church erected for their convenience."⁵ Bishop Fenwick promised to visit them at once, but was prevented from doing so by a sudden call to the deathbed of his brother Enoch in Maryland. At the beginning of the next year the Catholics of Pawtucket and Providence joined in requesting to have a priest, and offered to build a small church in one or the other of these places. Hence, on January 4, 1828 — a red-letter day in the history of the Church in southern New England — the Rev. Robert D. Woodley, who had just come to offer his services to the Diocese of Boston, was commissioned to go to Rhode Island to investigate the feasibility of founding a church there.

Received at Pawtucket and Providence with open arms, the young priest returned to Boston after three weeks with so optimistic a report that he was sent back to take up a permanent mission, which was to include Rhode Island and the contiguous parts of Massachusetts.⁶ Later in the year, when a priest was called for at Hartford, the State of Connecticut also was added to his sphere. Within this enormous "parish," which today is divided among five dioceses, Woodley for three years displayed a remarkable activity. He was the first priest of the Diocese of Boston who habitually and incessantly traveled over a large area, pursuing every group of Catholics brought to his attention, gathering new congregations and saying the first Mass in many places, giving the first impetus to the founding of numerous churches, setting an example of the kind of apostolate for which Father Fitton was later to be famous.

⁴ *Memoranda*, Feb. 2, 1827.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Oct. 31, 1827.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Jan. 10, 27, Feb. 6, 1828.

Providence and Pawtucket, which between them may have had four hundred Catholics,⁷ received from the first about half of Father Woodley's time and attention. The question as to which of these places should have the first church to be built in Rhode Island was settled in favor of Pawtucket. Two reasons, apparently, dictated this somewhat unfortunate decision: first, that village at the moment had more Catholic residents than Providence; and, secondly, in August, 1828, David Wilkinson, a prominent iron manufacturer and inventor, and a Protestant, donated a handsome lot, one hundred and twenty-five feet square, in Pawtucket as the site for a Catholic church.⁸ Father Woodley and his people then set about collecting funds, and with such encouraging results that early the next year the contract was awarded to a couple of Yankee carpenters, for thirteen hundred dollars; and by autumn the "neat wooden building, painted white, with green doors and Venetian blinds,"⁹ was finished. On Christmas Day, 1829, St. Mary's Church was dedicated.

While the Providence people appear to have done what they could to assist their brethren in Pawtucket, and generously refrained from launching a similar enterprise until the first one had been completed, they did insist, from the first, on having services in their own town. For this purpose, early in 1828, Father Woodley secured the use of Mechanics' Hall, opposite the market-place, a room capable of holding five hundred people; and Bishop Fenwick found it nearly filled when, on his first visit to the Rhode Island capital, he gave Confirmation there on September 14, 1828. Once the Pawtucket church was built, Father Woodley hoped to erect one in Providence; and

⁷ This estimate is given in the appeal issued by the Catholics of the two places to their fellow citizens for aid in building a church, printed in the *Providence Patriot*, Oct. 22, 1828, and in other newspapers. It seems much more probable than the low figures given in Bishop Fenwick's *Memoirs*, under date of 1828: 100 Catholics at Pawtucket and 50 at Providence. The Bishop's further computations — 50 at Taunton, 20 at Fall River, scarcely 20 at Newport — also seem, especially as regards Newport, unduly pessimistic.

⁸ The text of this deed, dated Aug. 27, is printed by Rev. John H. McKenna, *The Centenary Story of Old St. Mary's, Pawtucket, R. I., 1829-1929* (Providence, n.d.), pp. 12-15.

⁹ *Memoranda*, Nov. 11, 1829.

it was probably with this object in view that he bought a lot on Pearl Street, in the southwestern part of the town, in June, 1830.¹⁰

Meanwhile, anticipating even Pawtucket, Newport had been the first town in Rhode Island to possess a Catholic church. On his first visit there, in late February, 1828, Father Woodley had been invited to buy what he described as "a beautiful school-house, in a central situation in the town, capable of holding four to five hundred people" — it was the academy conducted for many years on Barney Street by Eleazar Trevett — at the price of eleven hundred dollars, to be paid in five years.¹¹ With the Bishop's sanction, the purchase was effected April 8th,¹² and the academy was immediately put into use as a Catholic church.¹³ When Dr. Fenwick, however, came to inspect the place, he was sorely disappointed: the location, he admitted, was excellent, but the lot was too narrow, the building too mean, the price too high. As the one means of redeeming what he evidently considered a bad bargain, he urged Father Woodley to buy the adjacent lot in order to gain adequate room and frontage on the street.¹⁴ At all events, the Newport congregation, though chiefly made up of poor laborers at Fort Adams and coal miners, succeeded in meeting their church debt without crises and without appealing for Protestant help, as the Pawtucket people had done. Father Woodley came to attend them monthly. The adjacent lot was purchased in 1830.¹⁵ In general, the Newport church seems to have developed more prosperously and peacefully than did most of Father Woodley's congregations.

Immediately upon getting his permanent mission, at the beginning of February, 1828, that zealous priest had made a tour of the leading towns of southeastern Massachusetts. At Taun-

¹⁰ *Providence Registry of Deeds*, book 59, p. 75 (June 8, 1830).

¹¹ *Memoranda*, March 7, 1828.

¹² Copy of the deed in the *Providence Diocesan Archives*.

¹³ The first Catholic services were held there, in fact, April 6, 1828 (*Newport Mercury*, April 12).

¹⁴ *Memoranda*, Nov. 1, 1828.

¹⁵ Deed of May 1, 1830 (*Providence Dioc. Arch.*).

ton, Sunday, February 10th, he said what was probably the first public Mass. Henceforth he continued to visit that town about once every two months, officiating in a rented schoolhouse. The Catholics of Taunton were few in number — not more than one hundred, in all probability; but they seem to have been more well-to-do and more enterprising than most groups of that size. Already by the summer of 1830 they were petitioning the Bishop for permission to build a church.¹⁶

New Bedford, where no priest is known to have said Mass since 1823, was first visited by Father Woodley at the end of February, 1828, and henceforth was attended at least every few months. With considerable aid from Protestants, Father Lariscy's little church was completed and somewhat enlarged, and was dedicated on New Year's Day, 1830.

It was as late as 1822 that the first Catholic family settled in Fall River: Patrick Kennedy, a sturdy and pious young Irishman, with his wife and five children. He is said to have walked from there to Boston several times to make his Easter duty.¹⁷ While other Catholics had since arrived, the flock was evidently a very small one when Father Woodley came there and said the first public Mass — presumably on May 18, 1828.¹⁸ Thereafter he appeared at Fall River two to four times a year.

While the places already named were Father Woodley's chief missions, his baptismal register and other sources show that he officiated occasionally at many other towns. At Woonsocket, where a few French families settled in the years 1815 to 1821, and the Irish began to appear a few years later, the tradition is that the first Mass was said by Father Woodley in 1828, in the house of William Allen, a liberal Quaker.¹⁹ All sources

¹⁶ *Memoranda*, June 29.

¹⁷ Rev. Francis J. Bradley, *A Brief History of the Diocese of Fall River, Massachusetts. Edited and Brought up to Date by Rev. Michael V. McCarthy* (n.p., 1931), pp. 13, 16.

¹⁸ Woodley's baptismal register (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*) shows that he baptized at Providence May 16th, and at Fall River on the 19th. It seems altogether likely that on this, his first visit to Fall River, he would have arranged to be there on Sunday, the 18th, in order to give the people there their first opportunity in that town to hear Mass.

¹⁹ Marie Louise Bonier, *Débuts de la colonie franco-américaine de Woonsocket, R.I.* (Framingham, 1920), p. 79; James W. Smyth, *History of the Catholic Church*

agree that it was the building of the Blackstone Canal that brought the first Catholics to Worcester, about 1826; and the moment that canal was opened, Father Woodley visited that town, on Sunday, October 12, 1828, when, in all probability, he said the first public Mass. His register of baptisms reveals that he returned to Worcester once in 1828, and twice in 1829, each time on a Sunday, when there can be little doubt that he would have assembled the Catholics for the holy Sacrifice.²⁰ Cranston (Rhode Island), and Uxbridge, Leicester, South Oxford, Norton, Wareham, Quincy, and Dorchester (Massachusetts) are some other places where Father Woodley is known to have made missionary visits. His work in Connecticut will be described later.

It was the Connecticut part of his "diocese" that was first removed from his jurisdiction, in August, 1829. The next amputation was made at the eastern extremity a year later. The developments in this quarter began when in September, 1829, Father William Tyler was sent to visit the Catholic glassmakers of Sandwich.²¹ Two further visits by that priest and one by the Bishop having revealed that there were about seventy Catholics in that town and that they were eager to have a church, Dr. Fenwick determined to gratify them. The people themselves having raised six hundred dollars and bought a lot, the Bishop had a small frame church, 40 by 30 feet, built in Boston and sent down by water. Then, on September 19, 1830, he, with the Rev. Virgil Barber and a number of laymen, arrived from Boston by boat — a sadly seasick party, after a stormy all-night trip; and St. Peter's, Sandwich, was duly dedicated, amid a great crowd from all the neighboring towns, including some who had come on foot eighteen miles from Wareham.²² On October 2nd the newly ordained Father Peter Connolly was then sent down to take charge of the new church, and also of

in Woonsocket and Vicinity, from the Celebration of the First Mass in 1828 to the Present Time (Woonsocket, 1903), pp. 53 ff.

²⁰ These facts deserve to be emphasized in view of what has become almost the accepted story that the first Mass in Worcester was said by Father Fitton in 1834.

²¹ Bishop Fenwick's *Memoranda*, Sept. 4, and a little more fully in his *Memoirs*.

²² *Memoranda*, March 14, May 11, June 3, 25-27, July 30, Sept. 18-21, 1830.

Wareham, where the factories were drawing immigrants, and of New Bedford.

Father Woodley did not long outlast these reductions of his mission. Prosperous as his first two years had been, 1830 was for him a year of misfortunes. His major difficulty was that since 1829 Pawtucket was prostrate with a business crash, from which it was not to recover for two decades. The Catholic population simply melted away, collections dried up, and since Father Woodley could not meet the second installment on the debt due to the carpenters, the latter turned to the Bishop, threatening to attach the church. How feeble were the financial resources of the Diocese of Boston is shown by the fact that the Charitable Irish Society of that city had to come to the rescue, with a loan of \$480. A few months later, however, for some reason their Treasurer demanded their money back, and the Bishop had to advance from his own scanty funds the amount needed to save the Pawtucket church.²³ Troubles in other places were not lacking. It would seem both that the young Virginian had not been very successful in dealing with Irish congregations and that he was at this time in sore financial straits. The lot bought at Providence had, for instance, to be mortgaged (November 15th) for a loan of thirty-five dollars, and shortly afterwards to be sold.²⁴

On November 3rd the Bishop, departing for a long absence in northern New England, sent another newly ordained priest, Father Corry, to assist Father Woodley in his numerous missions. It was at first agreed that the former should serve Pawtucket and Taunton, while the latter kept Providence, Newport, and Fall River. What followed is obscure. We are told only that there was some outbreak, some "fermentation," against Father Woodley, at Providence presumably, as a result of which the Vicar-General, Dr. O'Flaherty, on November 30th, apparently, recalled that priest to Boston and turned over

²³ *Memoranda*, Jan. 23, March 24, July 7; mortgage of the church to the Charitable Irish Society, March 24, 1830, and certificate of indebtedness to Bishop Fenwick for \$587.50, Sept. 14, 1830 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

²⁴ *Providence Registry of Deeds*, book 59, p. 219, and book 60, p. 177.

the whole mission to Father Corry. Bishop Fenwick, on his return in late December, confirmed this arrangement.²⁵

Father Woodley was stationed at the Cathedral in Boston for five months, and then obtained his Exeat in order to return to Georgetown and enter the Society of Jesus. After long and meritorious service in Maryland, he died at Port Tobacco October 25, 1857. Whatever mistakes or misunderstandings may have clouded the end of his career here, he deserves a high rank among the pioneer priests of New England. Three dioceses, at least, may look back upon him as their founder.

II

Connecticut, during the third decade of the nineteenth century, lagged far behind Rhode Island and Massachusetts in industrial development and immigration. Even in the larger towns the Irish Catholic element was generally represented only by a handful of people, or by a "first Catholic family," or a "first Irish settler." Nowhere else in New England, perhaps, were immigrants viewed with more wonder, distrust, or dislike than in this classic land of conservatism and of Puritan orthodoxy. When the first Irishman settled in Danbury, about 1825, it is said that his shanty was a curiosity that people came from many miles to see.²⁶ The first larger groups of Irishmen were brought in to work on the canals or in the quarries at Portland, near Middletown. In 1827 the newspapers reported four hundred men, mostly Irish Catholics, employed near Hartford in building the Enfield Canal, and one hundred and seventy Irishmen arriving at New Haven to work on the Farmington

²⁵ From an evidently loose statement in Bishop Fenwick's *Memoranda*, under date of Nov. 3, 1830, nearly all writers have been misled into saying that from that date onward Providence and Taunton were assigned to Father Corry alone. The newspapers, in which Father Woodley regularly announced his services, and other evidence besides, show that down to the end of November the division indicated in the text prevailed. The *Memoranda* (Dec. 22, 27, 1830) supply what little data we have as to the reasons for Father Woodley's recall, and Father Fitton (*Sketches*, p. 223) supplies what is apparently the correct date of it.

²⁶ Jarvis M. Morse, *A Neglected Period of Connecticut's History, 1818-1850* (New Haven, 1933), p. 23.

Canal.²⁷ Thanks to these sturdy new arrivals and to increasing chances for employment in trade or industry, in the later 1820's small Catholic colonies were found in at least five Connecticut towns: at Hartford, New Haven, New London, Middletown, and Bridgeport.

At Hartford, indeed, the first years of the decade had seen the gathering of a band of Catholics who had sought and received a visit from Bishop Cheverus in 1823, and whom Vicar-General Taylor in 1824 was at least planning to visit. That this diminutive group of eighteen or twenty people became the nucleus from which, within a very few years, developed the organized Church in Connecticut was due chiefly to the zeal and activity of one of the most remarkable convert-families in the history of Catholic New England: the Taylors, of Hartford.

The father of this family, Solomon Taylor, of old Massachusetts stock, was a prosperous carpenter and builder at Hartford and a member of the First Church (Congregationalist). On his death in 1813 he left behind him his widow, Mary Hartshorn Taylor; six sons — Augustine Deodat (born in 1796), Francis Horace (born in 1797), Solomon, Charles, Anson, and Henry; and two daughters, Roxana and Mary. About the year 1817, Francis H. Taylor went off to Montreal, where he entered the tailoring business in partnership with a pious young Catholic from Corfu named Nicholas Filgiano, and where he soon married a Catholic wife, Marie-Louise Plantade.²⁸ Whether it was, as Father Fitton has suggested,²⁹ because of the impression made upon him by the warm faith of French Canada, or through the influence of his partner and brother-in-law, or through that of the lady who became his wife, at all events, the

²⁷ *Connecticut Observer*, Oct. 15; *Boston Recorder*, Nov. 9; *New England Palladium*, Aug. 17.

²⁸ This marriage took place at the Church of Notre Dame, Montreal, Jan. 25, 1818. This record and many others from the Acts of the Judiciary District of Montreal which I have received through the kindness of the archivist, M. E.-Z. Massicotte, throw some light, at least, upon a hitherto almost unknown chapter in the career of Francis Taylor, a chapter decisive for his own life and for that of all his family.

²⁹ *Sketches*, p. 190.

young Yankee quickly became a Catholic himself, probably even before his marriage. And so enthusiastic a one that when in 1825 he abandoned business in Montreal and returned to his native city, in relatively affluent circumstances, his greatest desire was to spread his new faith.

For nearly two years he then appears to have resided in Hartford. While much in the history of that period is obscure or a matter of conjecture, it is clear that behind every move made to advance the Catholic cause there, one may discern the hand of Francis Taylor. His first care was to convert his family, and in course of time, he succeeded in winning to the faith his mother, his five brothers, and one or possibly both sisters.³⁰ Wellnigh the last of the family to surrender was the eldest brother, Deodat, who, although he had heard and had been deeply impressed by Bishop Cheverus in 1823, acknowledged himself a Catholic only in 1828. Once converted, however, he was throughout his long life to show himself no less ardent an apostle than Francis.³¹

Meanwhile, the latter, immediately after his return to Hartford, had collected the few Catholics and — with magnificent temerity — suggested the idea of building a church. For this purpose and in order to obtain occasional visits from a priest, a letter was dispatched to the Very Rev. William Taylor, then Administrator of Boston.³² As this appeal may well have arrived at about the same time as the news of Bishop Fenwick's appointment, it elicited no very definite reply. The one result of it was that in April, 1826, Father Virgil Barber came to Hartford and stayed for a week at Francis Taylor's house, where he said Mass for the little flock, administered the Sacraments, and

³⁰ Roxana Taylor, who married a man named Parker, is the one member of the family whose conversion remains in doubt.

³¹ A. T. Andreas, *History of Chicago* (3 vols.: Chicago, 1884), I, 145, has even stated that Deodat Taylor was converted by Cheverus. He adds what is probably more true that Taylor entered the Catholic Church "notwithstanding the efforts and protests of Rev. Mr. Hawes and the good deacons of the Presbyterian Church, all of whom thought him insane."

³² *Pilot*, Feb. 19, 1842 (an article entitled "Statistics of the Catholic Church in Hartford," which is one of the chief sources we possess for the early history of Catholicism in that city).

— probably — received into the Church a good part of the Taylor family, including Charles and Anson, who soon after set out to seek their fortunes in the Middle West.³³ Thwarted for the time being in more ambitious hopes, the Hartford Catholics had to content themselves with meeting on Sundays for prayers, pious reading, and mutual edification. From an early date these gatherings were held in the historic upper room at 204 Main Street.³⁴

The following year Connecticut again enjoyed the visits of a priest. The Very Rev. John Power, Vicar-General of New York, was called in August, 1827, by the workers on the Enfield Canal to attend one of their fellows who was dangerously ill; and in October he came a second time, perhaps to fulfill a promise. On both occasions he said Mass at Enfield — the first time in the open air, the second time in a dilapidated building — and at Hartford. On one or the other of these visits he also said Mass for the faithful of New Haven in the only place which the poverty of the Catholics and the bigotry of the non-Catholics allowed him to use — a bar-room dressed up as far as possible for the occasion.³⁵

Towards the end of 1826, Francis Taylor removed to Charleston, South Carolina, where for the next four or five years he appears as a merchant tailor and a leading member of the Cathedral parish. Nevertheless, he continued to exert a strong influence at Hartford through frequent visits, a generous purse, and his brother Deodat, who was now ready to step into his place as the leader of the Catholics. Through their combined efforts, in all probability, in the summer of 1828 a new petition was sent to Bishop Fenwick, requesting permission to build a small church and the visit of a priest.³⁶ The Bishop, who was doubtless familiar with the situation at Hartford and was eager to establish a church in the capital of Connecticut, appears to have sanctioned both requests. In September Father Woodley,

³³ *Pilot, loc. cit.*; *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 120; Bishop Fenwick to Father Dzierozynski, S.J., April 11, 1826 (*Fordham Arch.*, 207 K O).

³⁴ Father Fitton, *Sketches*, pp. 190-191.

³⁵ *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 121, 325.

³⁶ Father Fitton, *Sketches*, p. 191.

whose mission was now extended to the State of Connecticut, made his first visits to Hartford and Enfield, and received Deodat Taylor, along with his brother Henry, into the Church;³⁷ and before he left a lot for a church had been purchased.³⁸ This first lot had, indeed, to be abandoned, since the seller could not produce a clear title; but a few weeks later Deodat Taylor bought a new piece of ground on Maiden Lane (now Wells Street);³⁹ and here during the winter preparations for building were carried on.

In the spring of 1829, however, a new plan cropped up. The Episcopalians for some years had been building a handsome stone edifice (the present Christ Church), and were therefore anxious to sell their old wooden church, which stood on the northwest corner of Church and Main Streets, provided it were moved to another site. But the price, nine hundred dollars for church and organ, added to the cost of buying an adjacent lot in the centre of town, represented a sum which it might be doubted whether a handful of Catholics could raise; and the Episcopalians seem also to have hesitated about incurring the odium of selling a church to Catholics. It was, most probably, at this point that Nicholas Devereux, a wealthy and devout Irishman, of Utica, New York, intervened in a way long gratefully remembered by the Catholics of Hartford. Having come to the city on a business trip and attended Mass one Sunday,⁴⁰ Mr. Devereux was distressed both at finding the Catholics worshipping in cramped, unsuitable quarters, and at being told by the priest that the plan of buying the Episcopal church was impossible because of bigotry on the one hand and lack of funds on the other. He thereupon took up the matter with several leading Episcopalians of his acquaintance, offering to be personally responsible for whatever sum might be needed to obtain the building for his coreligionists. This guarantee from so unimpeachable a source seems to have been decisive both in

³⁷ Father Woodley's *Register of Baptisms*, Sept. 22-26 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

³⁸ *Providence Patriot*, Oct. 1, 1828.

³⁹ Oct. 22, 1828 (*Hartford Land Records, Town Clerk's Office*, book 47, p. 209).

⁴⁰ Presumably on May 24, the only Sunday in nine months when Father Woodley is known to have officiated at Hartford.

persuading the Episcopalians to sell and encouraging the Catholics to buy.⁴¹

Meantime, another enterprise had been launched which illustrates in striking fashion the zeal and courage of the Hartford group. Although they yet had neither a church nor a resident priest, they had already decided to found a Catholic newspaper — the first to be established in New England, and one of the earliest to appear anywhere in the country. Their object was both to spread their faith and to defend it against the attacks that had multiplied in the Protestant press from the moment when there began to be talk of a Catholic church in Hartford. For this purpose there was formed early in the year an association of gentlemen, called the "Catholic Tract Society," which undertook to raise funds sufficient to keep the paper going; and in April it was announced that a journal to be called *The Catholic Press* would begin publication in July.⁴² The moving spirit behind this project and the chief financial backer was assuredly Francis Taylor, who, since his removal to Charleston, may have been impressed with the utility of Bishop England's newspaper, then the one outstanding Catholic organ in the United States. It was Francis Taylor who bought and shipped to Hartford the typographical outfit required. It was probably he who provided the printer who was to conduct the paper: a young Virginian, a convert like himself, named Alfred M. Talley, whom there is some reason to think he picked up at Charleston.

In July, 1829, Hartford was the scene of unprecedented Catholic activity. Bishop Fenwick arrived on the 10th from Boston for his first visit to the Connecticut capital. Father

⁴¹ Mr. Devereux's intervention, which Bishop Galberry nearly fifty years later declared was "familiar to almost every Catholic in Connecticut," and which he himself had heard related "over and over on public occasions," is described most fully in *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 185 f., and by Thomas P. Kernan, "Nicholas Devereux, Model of Catholic Action," *U.S. Cath. Hist. Soc., Records and Studies*, XXV (1935), 160 f. Both these sources are vague or misleading as to the date of the affair, but it would seem that the spring of 1829 is the only period into which the episode can well be fitted.

⁴² This advertisement began to appear in the *U.S. Cath. Miscellany*, April 25, 1829.

Woodley arrived from Providence. Francis Taylor arrived from Charleston. The Bishop, accompanied by the two elder Taylors, inspected the Episcopal church, which he deemed a very good bargain; conferred with the vestrymen of Christ Church and their chief, Bishop Brownell, about the terms of the transfer; selected a lot on Talcott Street, hardly more than across the street from where the church to be bought then stood; and ended by authorizing Deodat Taylor to buy that church and lot as soon as he was able.⁴³

On July 11th the first number of *The Catholic Press* was published. Bishop Fenwick, highly pleased with the new venture, dashed off two editorials for the first number, and several more for the second. One of the Protestant journals of the town having ended some very ungracious comments on "Romanism in Connecticut" with the question, "How will it read in history, that in 1829, Hartford, in the State of Connecticut, was made the centre of a Roman Catholic Mission?" the Bishop replied in a suave article that 'it would read exceedingly well.' ⁴⁴

On Sunday the 12th, he celebrated Mass in the upper room at 204 Main Street which, after long serving as chapel and habitual meeting-place of the Hartford Catholics, was now also their newspaper office. Nearly all the faithful assembled that morning, but, according to Dr. Fenwick's *Memoirs*, they "did not amount to more than a couple of dozen." That evening he preached in the State House before "a crowded audience consisting of all denominations of Christians." ⁴⁵

The presence of a Catholic bishop — and one so impressive, genial, and vivacious as this one! — seems to have called forth a lively outburst of curiosity in the old Puritan town. Night after

⁴³ These transactions were spread out over the five days that Bishop Fenwick spent in Hartford; and in fact the Episcopal church was not formally purchased until nearly two years later. In his *Memoirs*, written some time afterwards, the Bishop has telescoped events together to the point of affirming that on the afternoon of July 10th the church was inspected and bought, the lot selected and bought, and "in the course of a few hours all was accomplished"; and John Gilmary Shea (*History of the Catholic Church in the United States*, III, 156 f.) has reproduced this account uncritically.

⁴⁴ *Connecticut Observer*, July 10, 1829; *Catholic Press*, July 11th.

⁴⁵ *Memoirs*.

night at the newspaper office Bishop Fenwick was besieged with callers who "requested to be informed of the peculiar doctrines of the Catholic Church, and the grounds of the same." ⁴⁶ When on the 15th he departed for Boston, he was evidently elated over the results accomplished and convinced that 'the Catholic religion was likely to take very well in Hartford.' ⁴⁷

Father Woodley meanwhile had again visited the canal-builders at Enfield and the little flock at New Haven, where he celebrated Mass in a barn "in such a dilapidated condition that the wind whistled through the crevices of the walls and the good people thought it miraculous that the candles on the altar were not extinguished." ⁴⁸ It was his last tour among the congregations of Connecticut. In order to consolidate and extend recent gains, the Bishop on August 25th dispatched Father O'Cavanagh to become first resident pastor of Hartford and to serve the other missions throughout the State.

At Hartford progress continued briskly. The weekly *Catholic Press* maintained very respectable standards of excellence, with the new pastor acting as director, and with occasional articles from Father Woodley, Francis and Deodat Taylor, Daniel Barber, and, probably, the Bishop. It also issued a series of religious books and tracts, old and new. On July 19th the first Catholic Sunday school in Connecticut was opened. In September the owner of the desired lot on Talcott Street contracted by bond to sell it. By the end of the year the Episcopalians, having finished their new church, were ready to turn over their old one even though the Catholics were not yet ready to pay for it. Deodat Taylor, a carpenter and builder by profession, constructed on the Talcott Street lot an ample basement, containing schoolrooms in front and apartments for clergymen in the rear, and then moved thither the former Episcopal church, which he repaired and fitted out for Catholic worship. Bishop Fenwick, returning to Hartford when all was ready, was much pleased both with the building itself,

⁴⁶ *Memoirs; Memoranda*, July 13, 1829.

⁴⁷ *Memoranda*, July 13, 15.

⁴⁸ *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 325.

which he found "truly beautiful as well as spacious," and with its fine organ, its imposing steeple, and the admirable location on an eminence in the centre of the town. On June 17, 1830, he dedicated the "Church of the Holy Trinity," the first Catholic church in Connecticut, before "a numerous Congregation consisting principally of the respectable Protestants of the Town."⁴⁹ Father O'Cavanagh sang the High Mass, to which an improvised choir, made up chiefly of converts, responded as best they knew how. The Bishop, who delighted to address non-Catholic audiences, preached at length on the Catholic doctrine about the Mass. The little local group whose exertions had made that great day possible poured forth their rapturous feelings in *The Press*:

Who could believe two years hence that in a section of the country where our holy religion was scarcely known (or, if superficially known, known only through the caricatures of its enemies) there would be this day a "chosen and sanctified place" to present that pure, clean and holy oblation, which, according to the prophet Malachias, was and is to be offered up "from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof"! . . . To us the hallowed dedication of Trinity Church appeared awfully sublime and strikingly significant.⁵⁰

It is somewhat painful to turn from that glad day to the dolorous financial aftermath. The total cost of acquiring the new church with its basement and lot, was two thousand five hundred dollars: a sum which the congregation, of its own resources, was totally unable to raise. Recourse must be had to Nicholas Devereux, who was willing to lend, not to give, the funds required. It was only on April 4, 1831, with money so obtained that Deodat Taylor actually bought the lot and church, which he made over to the Bishop nine months later: and the property thus acquired was encumbered with a debt of two thousand five hundred dollars to Devereux and another debt of one thousand dollars to two Hartford money-lenders

⁴⁹ *Memoranda*, June 17.

⁵⁰ *Catholic Press*, June 19, 1830.

which were to hang like a dark cloud over the parish for years.⁵¹

At any rate, in all respects save financial the Hartford venture was succeeding. Within a year the little congregation had doubled in size, largely through conversions, of which Hartford furnished an unusual number. Among these converts the most notable, perhaps, was Joseph Brigden, a schoolmaster, of whose fervor his close friend Father Fitton has related that, from the time of his reception into the church to the end of his long life, he never failed to pass at least an hour a day in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament.⁵² It was he who, on November 2, 1830, opened what was perhaps the first Catholic day-school at Hartford.⁵³ Unfortunately, it enrolled but ten pupils, and closed after the first year for lack of support. Brigden also wrote perhaps the best piece of apologetics that emanated from the Hartford group of that time: the book commonly referred to as *The Connecticut Convert*.⁵⁴

At the end of July, 1830, Bishop Fenwick sent Father Fitton as assistant to Father O'Cavanagh. Hitherto tied up in Boston most of the time since his ordination, Father Fitton now found for the first time an opportunity for that kind of far-flung apostolate for which he was to be celebrated. New Haven, a larger

⁵¹ *Records, Town Clerk's Office, Hartford:*

April 4, 1831, Wm. Imlay and others, vestrymen of Christ Church, to A. D. Taylor (book 46, p. 219);

April 4, 1831, Thos. S. Williams to Taylor (book 50, p. 49);

April 6, 1831, A. D. Taylor to Nicholas Devereux (mortgage) (book 50, p. 42);

Jan. 11, 1832, A. D. Taylor to Bishop Fenwick (book 50, p. 512).

⁵² Father Fitton, *Sketches*, p. 194. Joseph Brigden, born at Middletown, Conn., in 1778, for many years led a roving life, first as a shoemaker, later as a school-teacher. It was apparently while he was residing in Maryland or at Georgetown that he became a Catholic. He taught for a while for the Jesuits at Georgetown College; was at Hartford in the years 1829-1831; and after a few years again in the South, became the house-companion of Father Fitton at Worcester in 1836, teaching in Mount St. James Academy and other schools till his death in 1846. An excellent obituary notice of his life and character appeared in the *Boston Pilot*, Aug. 1, 1846.

⁵³ Some sources allude vaguely to a Catholic school at Hartford in the winter of 1829-1830, but it is uncertain whether this was more than a project.

⁵⁴ The exact title was *A Brief Sketch of the True Religion, Written in the Form of Letters by a Native of Connecticut, Formerly a Member of the Presbyterian Church, and Since a Catholic Convert: Together with the Motives That Conducted His Choice, and the Invincible Reasons That Now Hold Him in the Catholic Communion* (Hartford, 1831. 88 pp.).

town than Hartford (with ten thousand people as against seven thousand), came to have frequent, periodical visits. New London, Middletown, and Chatham (Portland) became regular missionary stations. The Bridgeport tradition is that Father Fitton said the first Mass in that town in 1830, with a congregation of seventeen persons, in a room of a private house. While Father O'Cavanagh was commonly kept busy in Hartford, with the care of *The Press* especially upon his hands, it is likely that by the end of the year good Father Fitton was circulating far and wide around Connecticut.

Before terminating this sketch of the beginnings of the Church in that State, it may be of interest to outline the later fortunes of that family which had done so much to produce these happy results. Like half the other young men of Connecticut at that time, the Taylors were presently stricken with the "Western fever." Anson and Charles, after some years of Indian trading at Sault Ste. Marie, moved to Chicago (in 1829 and 1832 respectively), at the time when that rude pioneer village was just beginning its vertiginous growth. Deodat Taylor, who found his business going badly in Hartford, came on to join them in 1833, and Solomon soon after. Francis Taylor, disappointed by the lack of adequate financial support for the *Catholic Press* at Hartford, but still strongly interested in Catholic journalism, abandoned Charleston and tailoring and removed to St. Louis, where, in the summer of 1832, he founded the first Catholic newspaper to be established west of the Mississippi, *The Shepherd of the Valley*. After four years' experience with that paper, first as sole editor and publisher, and later as a member of an association which took it over, he probably convinced himself that Catholic journalism does not "pay its way": in 1836 he, too, went to Chicago and returned to tailoring. Alfred Talley, who had married Mary Taylor, continued to publish *The Press* at Hartford until 1833, and in 1835 rejoined his brothers-in-law in the rising Illinois metropolis.

Upon Catholicism in early Chicago the Taylors and Talleys had much the same stimulating effect as in Hartford. A letter

of 1845 describes how inert were the few Catholics in Chicago until first one Taylor appeared, and then his relatives, "seven or eight in number, all Yankees and all converts, removed here, and the Church increased wonderfully." ⁵⁵ Charles and Anson Taylor were among the little group who petitioned Bishop Rosati to have the first resident priest sent to Chicago. Anson rode through the wilderness to St. Louis to fetch that priest. Deodat Taylor built the first Catholic church, Old St. Mary's, in 1833; and he had at least a large share in building the next five Catholic churches erected in the city. Several of the brothers attained honorable positions in public life: Deodat, Francis, and Charles all served as Aldermen; Deodat was also City Collector and City Assessor; and Alfred Talley, for many years head of the composing office of the *Chicago Democrat*, held such a position among printers that "he was known as 'The Peace-Maker,' as nearly every dispute and disagreement among members of the craft was left to his unprejudiced decision." ⁵⁶

Respected, trusted, and beloved by all who knew him, Talley died November 28, 1870, at South Bend, Indiana, whither he had retired in order to educate his sons at Notre Dame University. Charles Taylor died September 20, 1867, at Indianola, Texas, where he was Collector of the Port. Anson Taylor died May 9, 1878, at his farm at Lakeside, Cook County, Illinois. Their mother, Mrs. Mary Hartshorn Taylor, who had followed her children to Chicago, died there at the age of ninety-six. Francis Taylor died March 4, 1889, at Niles, Michigan, at the age of ninety-two. Augustine Deodat, hailed for many years as one of the grand old pioneers of Chicago, died there March 31, 1891, when nearly ninety-six years old.

As far as can be learned, to the end of their long lives these convert-founders of the Hartford church remained devoted, active, and exemplary adherents of the faith which they had adopted, and to the advancement of which they had rendered,

⁵⁵ Letter of "M. H. K." from Chicago in the *Philadelphia Catholic Herald*, Jan. 30, 1845.

⁵⁶ *Chicago Tribune*, Nov. 30, 1870.

in the East and West alike, outstanding services that deserve grateful remembrance.⁵⁷

III

Although its Catholic history extends back to the seventeenth century, Vermont was the last State of New England to see the permanent establishment of the Catholic Church.

During the early nineteenth century the Green Mountain Commonwealth, along with Maine, offered New England's nearest equivalent to the frontier communities of the West; and during the 1820's its population was growing more rapidly, relatively at least, than that of any other New England State except Maine. But this population remained dispersed on farms and in villages. Despite the efforts made to build up manufacturing, no large industrial centres developed: the three largest towns in the State in 1830, Burlington, Middlebury, and Bennington, all fell short of four thousand inhabitants. Nevertheless, Catholic immigrants flocked in, in considerable numbers, to take up farms, become shopkeepers in the towns, or labor in mines, quarries, and factories. And here the Irish Catholic

⁵⁷ While in contemporary documents, such as Bishop Fenwick's *Memoranda*, the Taylors appear as the prime movers in all that concerned the founding of the Hartford church, and while they are given a prominent place in Father Fitton's *Sketches*, in the article already cited from *The Pilot* of Feb. 19, 1842, and in Thomas McManus, *Historical Sketch of the Catholic Church in Hartford* (Hartford, 1880), they have been passed over in almost complete silence by the more recent writers on the history of the Church in Connecticut.

Among the sources here used in sketching the history of this interesting family are:

Rev. Gilbert J. Garraghan, S.J., *The Catholic Church in Chicago, 1673-1871* (Chicago, 1921), which contains photographs of Deodat and Anson Taylor;

A. T. Andreas, *History of Chicago* (Chicago, 1884; 3 vols.);

"Reminiscences of A. D. Taylor," *Chicago Evening Journal*, Feb. 13, 1880;

The obituary notices of A. M. Talley and Anson Taylor in the *Chicago Tribune*, Nov. 30, 1870, May 11, 1878;

"The First Chicago Church Records," *Ill. Cath. Hist. Rev.*, III (1920-1921), pp. 404-436;

The unpublished records of the First (Congregational) and of Christ Church, Hartford;

The notes most kindly prepared for me about the history of her family by Miss Monica Taylor, the daughter of Anson H. Taylor, in the weeks just before her death, which occurred on June 12, 1939, 110 years after her father arrived in Chicago.

element was reinforced by probably an equal number of French-Canadians streaming down the shores of Lake Champlain.

By the later years of that decade, western Vermont, the richer and better settled half of the State, was dotted with small Catholic colonies. Such groups, each numbering usually only a score or two of persons, were to be found at Bennington, Dorset, Wallingford, Tinmouth, Poultney, Castleton, Shrewsbury, and Middlebury; with somewhat larger groups at Pittsford, where the ironworks employed Irish laborers, and at St. Albans, Swanton, and Fairfield in the north. At Vergennes, "the oldest and smallest city in New England," there may have been one hundred to two hundred Catholics, including several converts. One of the latter, Mrs. Daniel Nichols, whom Bishop Fenwick described as "a most zealous and edifying" adherent of her new faith,⁵⁸ had been so continually soliciting the sending of a priest and the founding of a church as to create the illusion at Boston that Vergennes — always a place of large and frustrated ambitions — was destined to be the cradle of Catholicity in Vermont. The real cradle was to be at the rising village of Burlington, where in 1830 the Bishop rather suddenly discovered that there were about one thousand Catholics. Obscurely, hardly noticed by anyone it seems, there had grown up in this remotest corner of the Diocese the largest agglomeration of Catholics then to be found anywhere in New England save at Boston and Charlestown: a Catholic colony five times the size of those in Providence or Portland, fifteen times the size of that in Hartford.

After the visits of Bishop Cheverus and Rev. Paul McQuade to Vergennes and its vicinity in 1822, no priest of the Diocese of Boston is known to have come to minister to the Vermont Catholics for six years. Only the devoted Abbé Pierre Mignault, curé of Chambly in the present Province of Quebec, continued to serve his scattered fellow countrymen throughout the State by those frequent visits which, begun in 1818, he kept up until 1853, and, as Bishop Fitzpatrick wrote, "always at his own expense and without remuneration, except the pleasure

⁵⁸ *Memoranda*, Dec. 4, 1830.

of doing good.”⁵⁹ After the founding in 1827 of the parish at Plattsburg, New York, its pastor, Father Patrick McGilligan, frequently attended the Irish settlers to the east of Lake Champlain.

The resumption of closer relations with Boston begins in 1828. Father Byrne, of the Cathedral, on a trip to Canada passed through Vermont that summer and is known to have performed some baptisms at Pittsfield.⁶⁰ Next year Bishop Fenwick, painfully aware of the spiritual destitution of his shepherdless flock, but unable to furnish a permanent priest, directed Father Fitton, who was going on a mission to Claremont, to make a brief tour through Vermont, as well. During the few weeks at his disposal, that zealous young priest appears to have scoured the west central and southwestern parts of the State as thoroughly as possible, from Vergennes to Bennington; but it is doubtful whether he had time to visit Burlington.⁶¹ In his *Sketches of the Establishment of the Church in New England*, he gives a vivid picture of the work of a pioneer priest of those days, as he portrays himself going around

administering the Sacraments, hearing confessions, and wherever favorable opportunity presented, and one or more families could be found, offering the holy Sacrifice of Mass, and preaching, not only to those of the household of faith, but those who were not thus peculiarly blessed, at one time in the village schoolhouse, at another in the Town House, and occasionally, where liberality permitted, in the meeting-house, and not unfrequently where a Catholic had never been seen, much less a living Catholic priest!

The method pursued on such occasions, and that which seldom failed to secure attention and favorable hearing, was to

⁵⁹ *Memoranda of the Diocese of Boston*, Oct. 19, 1846.

⁶⁰ *Boston Cathedral Register of Baptisms*, July 30, 1828.

⁶¹ Father Fitton left for Claremont July 20, 1829, and returned from there August 19th, according to Bishop Fenwick's *Memoranda*, in which, curiously enough, no mention is made of the Vermont trip. But that that trip must have been made within the dates just mentioned seems certain: the Cathedral Register shows that at no other period of that year was Father Fitton absent from Boston as much as for a fortnight. If in his *Sketches* he speaks of spending "several months" on this mission to Vermont (p. 243), his memory was clearly at fault. The list of places mentioned there (p. 244) probably gives a fairly complete itinerary of that trip.

invite the minister, elder or deacon, if either was present, or if absent, some one of the audience, to select a portion of the Scripture that might be deemed advisable to hear expounded in a Catholic sense, or any other doctrinal subject that might be thought instructive or interesting. The kindest feeling and attention was generally evinced. . . . Exceptions there were, it is true, but the "Green Mountain Boys" ever seemed, from some cause or other, more open-hearted, courteous, and obliging, . . . than citizens of certain other States.⁶²

Father Fitton's report, which must have revealed to Bishop Fenwick still more fully the acuteness of the Vermont situation, was doubtless reinforced by appeals such as that of James Sherlock, of Wallingford, who, early in 1830, wrote to Boston to beg for a resident priest.⁶³ Quite resolved to grant this request as soon as possible, the Bishop was then fortunate enough, while on a trip to New York, to pick up a new clerical recruit in the Rev. Jeremiah O'Callaghan; and on July 6th that doughty veteran — as sturdy as the granite of the Green Mountain State — was sent off to the vineyard which for nearly a quarter of a century he was to cultivate with outstanding success.

The new pastor of the entire State began with a two months' tour of all his scattered congregations, everywhere received with boundless joy by flocks who had "hitherto considered themselves as totally abandoned."⁶⁴ At Burlington he was delighted not only with the number of Catholics, but with the offer tendered him, immediately upon his arrival, of the gift of five acres of land on the outskirts of town as a site for a church. The donor was Colonel Archibald Hyde, assistant United States Collector of Customs, a wealthy, prominent, and somewhat eccentric citizen of Burlington, highly respected for his integrity and charities, but incorrigibly given to shocking a staid Yankee community by his independent views. He stalked about in Jacksonian days in eighteenth-century costume, with knee-breeches, buckled shoes, and a long pigtail; he had always been keenly interested in poor immigrants; he was henceforth to show him-

⁶² Pp. 243 f.

⁶³ *Memoranda*, Jan. 30, 1830.

⁶⁴ O'Callaghan, *Usury, Funds, and Banks* . . . (Burlington, 1834), pp. 63 f.

self the foremost defender, adviser, and benefactor of the Catholics, although he actually came into the Church only many years later, shortly before his death.⁶⁵ Not long after this good news from Burlington, Father O'Callaghan could also report that the Catholics of Vergennes, St. Albans, and Swanton were planning to build churches.⁶⁶

Highly encouraged, the Bishop in early December made a hurried visit to Vermont to stimulate these budding activities. At Vergennes he said Mass at the Nichols home for the Catholics of the neighborhood, seventy or eighty in number, and was cheered by the decision of Mrs. Nichols to donate an estate which she had inherited in Connecticut for the purpose of founding a church in Vergennes.⁶⁷ At Burlington, after approving the proposed site for the church, and calling upon Colonel Hyde, he assembled the Catholics for Mass on Sunday (December 12th), in the largest hall that could be obtained, the long room in Howard's Tavern. Preaching before the dense throng both in English and French, he assured them that he hoped and intended to erect a church for them in the following year, if their contributions would justify the undertaking. With abundant promises of support from the people, he departed homeward next day, doubtless happy in the conviction that the Church was at last taking firm root even in this most distant part of his Diocese.

En route he stopped over at Claremont for far less inspiring experiences. He said Mass before a shrunken and discouraged congregation in Father Barber's little church, and found the former Academy building in "a horrible condition." "*Quantum mutatus ab illo* when I visited it before," he wrote in his diary.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ See the article on him by Lyman Cummings, in Abby M. Hemenway, *The Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, I (Burlington, 1867), pp. 624-626. He was received into the Catholic Church May 24, 1846 (*Baptismal Register, Burlington Cathedral*), and died in 1847.

⁶⁶ *The Jesuit*, Sept. 4, 1830.

⁶⁷ Because of legal obstacles arising from the terms under which Mrs. Nichols inherited the estate, this plan seems later to have fallen through. As signs of the piety of this good lady's home, it may be noted that her son entered the Jesuit novitiate, but died prematurely, and that her granddaughter, Mary Ann Wilkins, became an Ursuline nun of Trois-Rivières, P.Q.

⁶⁸ *Memoranda*, Dec. 17, 18, 1830.

IV

Apart from Claremont, at least, and the Passamaquoddy Indians, all things had gone marvelously well for the Church during the first five years of Bishop Fenwick's episcopate. The number of churches had risen from nine to eighteen, the number of priests from three to fourteen. The undoubtedly large increase in the number of the faithful is more difficult to gauge. In a report sent to Rome early in 1831, Dr. Fenwick estimated the total Catholic population of the Diocese at fifteen thousand, and the number of Catholics in Boston alone at seven thousand.⁶⁹ There is much ground for thinking that these figures are far too conservative, but at all events, in comparison with the Bishop's estimate of only seven thousand Catholics in all New England in 1825, the progress made by 1830 was sufficiently marked.

The growing number of Catholics, the multiplication of their churches, and the wisdom of him who directed their forward movement attracted increasing recognition.

A Boston newspaper remarked in 1828: "Bishop Fenwick deserves particular praise for the manner in which he has discharged the duties of his office throughout the whole of his course."⁷⁰

Breaking with the old idea that Catholicism could never take deep root in the land of the Puritans, Bishop England's journal declared: "We know no part of the Union in which our Church promises so well as in New England."⁷¹

Bishop Fenwick himself was in high hopes as to the future growth of the Diocese, not only through immigration, but especially through conversions. In 1830 he wrote to his cousin, Bishop Edward Fenwick:

No diocess . . . wants aid more than this. Everything is to be done here, and I may add, that in no diocess are the prospects

⁶⁹ Report of April 24, 1831, in *Ristretto and Sommario on the State of the Diocese of Boston*, Sept. 19, 1831 (*Arch. Cong. Prop. F., Guilday Transcripts*, no. 2330).

⁷⁰ *Boston Gazette*, cited in *Bunker Hill Aurora*, Oct. 4, 1828.

⁷¹ *U.S. Cath. Miscellany*, May 30, 1829.

in favor of religion greater. We have lately had some very considerable conversions, one especially, of a man of wealth and standing — and I perceive throughout every part where I have been, a great desire to know the truth. Had I ten Priests more than I have, I could station them advantageously. . . . [If he could only get a Seminary, he continued] I shall not despair of beholding thousands who are natives of the country united to the Church in a very few years.⁷²

⁷² Letter of July 19, 1830 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

CHAPTER V

"THE OLD IMMIGRATION" (1815-1845)

I

IT WAS AROUND THE YEAR 1830 that the movement of immigration into the United States, which had been developing since 1815, first began to assume massive proportions and to arouse universal attention. While during the 1820's, according to the official American statistics, less than 150,000 immigrants had come to this country, during the thirties the number swelled to 600,000 and in the forties to over 1,500,000. By the fourth decade of the century the great Transatlantic Migration of Nations was thus well under way.

In this movement Ireland long played the most important rôle. The deluge of Irish immigrants who came to our shores at the time of the Famine in the late forties and immediately afterwards has largely eclipsed the "Old Immigration" of the preceding thirty years both in popular tradition and in the minds of historians. But though greatly surpassed in volume by the flood of the mid-nineteenth century, the Old Immigration brought more than one million Irish people across the ocean to find new homes in the United States and Canada. And by the 1830's it had already produced a radical transformation both in the position and prospects of the Catholic Church in this country and in the attitude of the community towards that Church.

The general causes of the Irish Exodus are, perhaps, sufficiently well known. In the singularly varied story of Ireland's misfortunes, the thirty years between Waterloo and the Famine have a distinctive character, which may be summed up under the two heads: an amazing increase in population and an alarming deterioration in economic conditions. The nation, which had been two thirds exterminated during the horrors of Crom-

well's time, and which a hundred years later was estimated at hardly more than two and a half millions, had begun to grow rapidly in numbers during the relatively good times that marked the last decades of the eighteenth century; and this phenomenal increase continued throughout the first forty-five years of the nineteenth century. The census of 1841 showed a population of well over eight millions in a small island where fifty years before there had scarcely been half that number. Ireland had suddenly become the most densely populated country in Europe.

Unfortunately, economic progress utterly failed to keep pace with this rise of population — quite the contrary. Ninety per cent of the Irish people still lived from agriculture, and within sixty years Irish agriculture had gone through two revolutions of opposite character. From Foster's Corn Law of 1784 down to the Peace of 1815, under the influence of protective duties and still more under the stimulus of twenty-three years of war conditions and war prices, agriculture had, indeed, enjoyed unprecedented prosperity. There had been a rush to turn land from grazing to tillage, to recruit tenants (since rents, too, were "up"), to multiply small holdings. Since 1793 even Catholic peasants had the franchise, and it seemed to the interest of the landlords to create as many tenant-voters as possible. But with 1815 the scene changed with tragic abruptness. Immediately after the Peace, agricultural prices fell abysmally, and they long remained at very depressed levels. Years of wretched weather, bad harvests, unpaid rents, and famished tenants clamoring for assistance increased the landlords' disgust with agriculture. During the struggle for Catholic Emancipation the peasant voters upset all calculations by voting as their conscience, not their landlords, dictated, and they were punished by being disfranchised (1829), thus losing all political value in their landlords' eyes. Hence, beginning around 1820 and continuing with increasing force after 1829, there set in a movement contrary to the preceding one: a movement to throw land from tillage into pasturage, a movement towards "consolidation" of estates by evicting tenants, a "clearance" movement — to clear

land of human "encumbrances" to make way for sheep and cattle. Coming just at a time when the population was increasing so rapidly, this change produced results that can easily be imagined. Thousands of tenant families were evicted; the competition for land still to be leased for agriculture was monstrosously increased; and the chances that the mass of the teeming population could make a decent living were reduced to the vanishing point.

There is superabundant evidence to show that the condition of the great majority of the peasants was miserable in the extreme. The worst-off were the agricultural laborers or "cottiers" — a mass of two to three million people — who usually held but a cabin and a potato patch. They fed their families from that patch, while they worked off the rent due the landlord, and sometimes earned a trifle besides, by labor at the rate of six to ten pence a day. Of their condition a British Royal Commission reported in 1845:

The agricultural labourer of Ireland continues to suffer the greatest privations and hardships; he continues to depend upon casual and precarious employment for subsistence; he is still badly housed, badly fed, badly clothed, and badly paid for his labour. We cannot forbear expressing our strong sense of the patient endurance which the labouring classes have generally exhibited under sufferings greater, we believe, than the people of any other country in Europe have to sustain.¹

Not much better off was the class just above, the farmers, who were supposed to occupy their holdings with some degree of permanency, with or without leases. Their poverty and distress may be traced to a multitude of causes: to rents driven up to exorbitant or impossible heights, especially through the baleful custom of letting land at public auction to the highest bidder ("canting"); to poor methods of cultivation, largely connected with the fact that (everywhere save in Ulster) any improvements made in a holding inured to the benefit not of the tenant but of the landlord, and would probably have as their

¹ *Report of the Devon Commission, Parliamentary Papers, 1845, vol. XIX, no. 605, p. 12.*

first result a raise in the rent; to the excessive disintegration of holdings through subletting and subdivisions; to short or uncertain tenures; to the growing predilection of the landlords for clearances and evictions.

The hard-pressed agricultural classes might have found some relief if Ireland had known any such industrial upsurge as most other countries were going through at that time. But for Irish industry, also, this was a period of decline and distress. Joined since 1800 in an involuntary and ill-assorted union with the vastly richer and economically more advanced neighboring island, Ireland was in no position to hold her own in industrial competition. Once the last protective duties had been repealed and free trade completely established within the United Kingdom (1824), the chief Irish manufactures (woolen, linen, and cotton goods) withered away, the once widely diffused linen industry alone maintaining itself with some success, and that only in Ulster. The manufacture of the famous Irish glass was hard hit by the excise duty laid upon it in 1826. The provision business, previously so flourishing, especially at Cork, declined from about the same date, owing largely to the repeal of duties on foreign provisions in the British market. With shipbuilding and the fisheries it was much the same story. In brief, the artisans and industrial workers found themselves in a position almost as trying as that of the agricultural population.

The most lurid revelation of the true state of affairs in Ireland was furnished by the ever-recurring famines. Half of the population, at least, had been reduced to such a state of impoverishment that they virtually lived on only one article of food, and that a root whose fecundity was surpassed only by its precariousness, the potato. These three decades were studded with years in which, through excessive dampness or through blights, there were more or less widespread, and more or less complete, failures of the potato crop (1817-1818, 1821, 1825, 1829-1830, 1832-1834, 1836, 1839-1842, 1844), spreading destitution, famine, and sometimes epidemics in their wake and foreshadowing the great catastrophe that began in 1845. Ireland thus presented the anomalous spectacle of a naturally fer-

tile island constantly exporting food to other countries, while the majority of its people lived on the narrowest margin of subsistence and a great part of them were in chronic danger of starvation.

In the discussions which waged mightily at that time over this situation, the view which more and more prevailed in the ruling circles was that the main cause of Ireland's maladies was overpopulation, and that the best remedy was emigration in order to get rid of the "redundant" human masses which the natural resources of the country were unable to support. Strong arguments can be advanced against these conclusions. It may be, as Professor O'Brien has urged, that with a complete change in the iniquitous system of land tenure, with a juster distribution of the wealth then being produced, with improved methods of agriculture, by bringing the bogs and waste lands under cultivation, and by bringing in capital and developing industry, Ireland might have supported not only the eight millions of 1841, but a much larger population.² At all events, the masses rallied to the view of the ruling circles. Naturally skeptical, in view of all past experience, that any thoroughgoing reforms were likely to be made at home, an ever-increasing number of Irish people turned to emigration to America as the best way out of desperate and almost intolerable conditions.

The exodus began almost immediately after the close of the Napoleonic Wars with the rush of the years 1816 to 1819. This emigration, which appears to have come chiefly from the North and to have been more Protestant than Catholic, attained the figure of twenty thousand in 1818. The American business depression of 1819 and various other factors checked this first movement, and for almost seven years emigration was restricted to moderate proportions. By 1827, however, conditions were ripe for a new mass movement. For the next eleven years Ire-

² George O'Brien, *The Economic History of Ireland from the Union to the Famine* (London, 1921), p. 75. In this account of Irish conditions I have made much use of this standard work, balanced by the somewhat divergent views of William F. Adams, *Ireland and Irish Immigration to the New World from 1815 to the Famine* (New Haven, 1932). Cf. also D. A. Chart, *Ireland from the Union to Catholic Emancipation: a Study of Social, Economic and Administrative Conditions, 1800-1829* (London, 1910).

land saw the first large-scale emigration, which in 1831 and 1832 rose to sixty-five thousand persons departing annually for North America. By this time, while Ulster still furnished the largest quota of emigrants, the tendency to emigrate was spreading to Munster and Leinster (less as yet to Connaught); and Catholic emigrants largely outnumbered Protestants, although not yet in numbers equal to their ratio in the total population. The emigrants down to this period seem to have been drawn mainly from the farmer and artisan classes, and less from the agricultural laborers, who were usually too poor to pay the cost of passage.

The panic of 1837 in the United States for a time arrested the movement. Within two years, however, the exodus had set in again, to rise in 1842 to nearly ninety-three thousand emigrants, and to continue, in spite of minor fluctuations, in great strength until the Famine extinguished all previous records. By this time the South of Ireland had come to surpass the North as a source of emigration; Catholic emigrants greatly outnumbered Protestants; and, thanks to cheaper rates and to passage-money remitted by compatriots in America, the agricultural laborers, the most impoverished class in Ireland, were coming to make up the bulk of those departing for the New World.³

II

A study of the immigration into New England during that period discloses two facts of great importance both for the general history of this region and for the history of the Catholic Church here. First, in marked contrast to the Middle Atlantic States or the Middle West, New England received very little immigration other than Irish. Secondly, it received a quite disproportionate share of the Irish immigration. The census of 1850 was to show that, with little more than one tenth of the total population of the country, the six New England States had one fifth of the Irish-born population. With respect to the

³ By far the most exhaustive and authoritative study of Irish emigration from 1815 to 1845 is that of William F. Adams, *op. cit.*

number of residents of Irish birth, Massachusetts ranked third among the States of the Union, and Connecticut seventh. What has been called "the Second Colonization of New England," or "the Celtic Conquest of Southern New England," was getting under way.

In order to explain these facts it is necessary to recall that the direction of European emigration in that early period depended not only on the preference of the emigrants themselves, but equally on the direction and organization of transatlantic commerce. Regular communications between European and American ports through vessels devoted primarily to carrying passengers and mail were then offered only by the so-called "packet" lines, of which New York and Liverpool were the chief termini. Boston between the years 1822 and 1834 enjoyed a direct connection with Liverpool through two successive lines of sailing packets; and from 1840 on it rejoiced in being the American terminus of the first transatlantic steam packets, the Cunard Line. But almost down to the end of the period the packet boats made very little effort to capture the immigrant trade. They were too small, they usually lacked steerage accommodations, and their cabin fares were relatively high. Ships chartered especially to convey emigrants were to be found only in exceptional years. The vast majority of those migrating to the New World had, therefore, to seek their passage in ordinary commercial vessels.

Transatlantic trade then had this peculiarity, that America exported chiefly goods of large bulk, such as tobacco, cotton, timber, wheat, and cattle, while Europe sent back chiefly wares of finer quality and smaller size, such as manufactured goods and articles of luxury. Owing to this difference in the bulk of the goods exchanged, westbound vessels ran the risk of having to go out with much unoccupied space or altogether in ballast. In this situation the growth of emigration after 1815 was a decided boon to the freight carriers. Demanding very little in the way of accommodations, the emigrants could be stowed away easily in almost any unoccupied space; because of their numbers, cheap rates could be allowed them; and the passage-money

thus obtained might mean for the shipowner the difference between a successful and an unprofitable voyage.

Such arrangements naturally had the result that emigration was directed along the routes of the established trade connections. The lively tobacco trade between Baltimore and Bremen, for instance, brought it about that the North-German emigrants, who usually took ship at Bremen, were commonly sent to Baltimore, whence most of them made their way to the upper Ohio Valley. South-German emigrants, who for a time usually embarked at Havre, a "cotton port," were normally shipped to New Orleans, whence most of them went on up the Mississippi. New York, which, thanks to canal and railroad connections, early became the Atlantic outlet for the products of the Middle West, had trade connections everywhere abroad, and received immigrants from everywhere. But Boston seemed to have no such means of tapping the sources of immigration.⁴

New England produced very few staple articles to ship to Europe, nor had it facilities comparable with those of New York for exporting Western products. Boston had very slight connections with those ports of the Continent whence emigrants were accustomed to sail — and this is probably the chief reason why so few Germans found their way hither. And Boston had almost no direct trade relations with Ireland. The "marine journals" which bulk so large in the newspapers of that time very rarely mention the arrival in Boston Harbor of a ship from any Irish port. This region would, therefore, probably have received but a relatively small share of the immigration of the period — some eddies, perhaps, of the great stream pouring into New York — had it not been for the peculiar cir-

⁴ For the ideas set forth in this paragraph and in many other parts of this chapter, the writer is largely indebted to the work of the late Professor Marcus Lee Hansen, whose years of research in this country and abroad enabled him to make contributions of the first importance to the history of American immigration, particularly in its European aspects. See especially his articles, "The History of American Immigration as a Field for Research," *Am. Hist. Rev.*, XXXII (1926-1927), 500-518; and "The Second Colonization of New England," *New England Quarterly*, II (1929), 539-560; and his posthumous volume, *The Atlantic Migration, 1607-1860: a History of the Continuing Colonization of the United States. With a Foreword by Arthur M. Schlesinger* (Cambridge, 1940).

cumstances that produced a mass movement of Irish immigrants to New England by way of New Brunswick.

This movement was the result of several factors. One was the series of British Passenger Acts, which had, among other aims, that of directing emigration from the United Kingdom to British North America rather than to the United States. This object it was hoped to attain by imposing much more severe restrictions as to the number of passengers that might be carried upon vessels going to the United States than upon ships bound for the colonies. These provisions, combined with the rather strict Passenger Act passed by the American Congress in 1819, were largely responsible for the fact that, from 1817 onward for many years, the rates for passage from the British Isles to the United States were regularly much higher than, and commonly even twice as high as, the rates to British America. It became cheaper indeed to go to the northern part of the United States via Canada than to go there directly. The great majority of Irish emigrants vastly preferred to find new homes under the Stars and Stripes rather than under the Union Jack; but if the cheapest routes to the Promised Land passed through the British colonies they were not unwilling to save money. From 1817 down to 1840 there was rarely a year when the number of Irish passengers landing in Canadian ⁵ ports did not exceed the numbers landing in the United States.

A second factor, and one of the utmost importance, was the timber trade. Ireland had been pretty completely stripped of her forests by the middle of the eighteenth century. She needed to import wood for innumerable purposes, but especially for building and for packing the provisions which she shipped to England. The eastern coasts of British North America and particularly the Province of New Brunswick were endlessly rich in forests, and since the Napoleonic Wars they had developed a very brisk timber trade with all parts of the United Kingdom, but especially with Ireland.

⁵ For the sake of brevity this expression may, perhaps, be permitted, although, strictly speaking, the name Canada was then applied only to what are now the Provinces of Quebec and Ontario.

The timber ships lent themselves to the emigrant traffic as did few others. Having to carry a very bulky cargo eastward, they were relatively large; and seldom having much freight on the westward voyage, they had much space for emigrants. They were to be found at almost every town or village seaport on the coast of Ireland, thus saving emigrants the need of any long journey to the point of embarkation. The man who went out to America in one of these ships was fairly sure of finding employment immediately upon his arrival in the sawmills or lumber yards or lumber camps, if he needed to replenish his funds before proceeding to his ultimate destination. Above all, being so numerous and so much in competition for passengers, the timber ships usually offered the cheapest fares of all the vessels that carried emigrants to North America.⁶ While the cost of steerage passage to New York (down to 1840) slowly dropped from £10 to £4, occasionally sinking to £3, the rate to St. John or Quebec in the timber ships usually hovered around 40s., and sometimes fell to 20 or even 15s.⁷ Hence this trade became "the handmaid of emigration,"⁸ and its ships "the greatest single medium of [emigrant] transportation."⁹

While these ships carried passengers to many British American ports, St. John disputed with Quebec for the lion's share, and it is the New Brunswick part of the traffic that chiefly concerns us here. From the fragmentary data available it has been calculated that that province received seven thousand immigrants in 1819; an average of six thousand a year in the early thirties; seven to eight thousand a year in the early forties,¹⁰

⁶ An exception might be made in favor of the fishing smacks from Newfoundland; but few emigrants cared to take them or go there.

⁷ Among many references that might be cited for these statements, see especially Hansen, *New England Quarterly*, *op. cit.*, p. 545, and Edwin C. Guillet, *The Great Migration: the Atlantic Crossing by Sailing-Ship since 1770* (Toronto, 1937), p. 50.

⁸ Abraham Gesner, *New Brunswick; with Notes for Emigrants* (London, 1847), p. 300.

⁹ William F. Adams, *Ireland and Irish Immigration*, p. 72.

¹⁰ Cf. William F. Ganong, "A Monograph of the Origin of the Settlements in New Brunswick," in *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, 2d ser., vol. X (1904-1905), sect. II, pp. 73 ff.; and the computations in Adams, *op. cit.*, pp. 413 f., 426.

nearly all these immigrants being presumably Irish. Now the great majority of these people had no intention of remaining in New Brunswick. They had merely chosen that route as the most convenient and least expensive way of getting to the United States. And the nearest part of the United States was New England. Some immigrants might seek work for a time in order to lay in a little money before going farther, but most of them, apparently, set out immediately after landing to reach the republic of their dreams.

There were two ways of getting there. The cheapest way was to proceed overland on foot, entering the United States at Calais or thereabouts, and walking on along the coast of Maine. Thousands followed this route, which was advertised in Ireland on the ground of "those living on that line of road being very kind to Strangers as they pass."¹¹ Not a few of these pilgrims settled down somewhere along the way in Maine, where a given locality or a chance for a job or an opportunity to take up a farm attracted them. As has been pointed out, the line of pioneer Catholic churches and mission stations, which by the end of the Fenwick period dotted the Maine coast from Calais to Portland, clearly defines this route.¹² Most of these pedestrians, however, appear to have gone farther — to Boston or beyond.¹³

The second and more popular plan was to proceed from St. John by boat to Boston, Eastport, Belfast, Portland, Portsmouth, or wherever else in New England chances for employment or the call of friends might direct. The Maritime Provinces carried on a brisk trade with the neighboring States, exporting plaster of Paris, timber, rum, molasses, fish, and coal;

¹¹ *Galway Free Press*, March 28, 1835, cited by Marcus L. Hansen, *New England Quarterly*, *op. cit.*, pp. 545-546.

¹² Hansen, *op. cit.*, p. 545.

¹³ That the poorest of the immigrants came this way, and that these were pretty numerous, is suggested by an irate report of a Committee of the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 1836, which refers to "the fact, so many times communicated to this Legislature, that nearly all the host of foreign paupers, with which we are already infested, has come in by land through the [British] provinces." This report is printed in *U.S. 24th Cong., 1st sess., House Doc. no. 219*, pp. 1-3.

and the boats which carried these cargoes were often ready to furnish a cheap passage to immigrants. The "plaster boats," in particular, seem during the early period to have been of great importance for this traffic. By 1830 there were regularly sailing packets between Boston, Eastport, and St. John, which carried immigrants through this second stage of their journey for two dollars. Ten years later there were steam packets, whose three-dollar steerage rates drew so much business that the Boston-St. John service became first weekly and then twice-a-week. We have no complete or very reliable statistics by which to measure this movement. It is significant, however, that in not a few years the number of Irish "alien passengers" recorded as landing in the Passamaquoddy customs district (Eastport) was greater than the number of those landing at Boston. The newspapers supply innumerable indications as to the constant influx of Irish immigrants into Boston through vessels arriving from St. John, St. Andrews, Eastport, and Calais. In six months of 1842, for example, one steamer, the *North America*, brought in 1,690 steerage passengers from St. John and Eastport, while from the same ports the steamer *Huntress* carried 525 to Portsmouth, New Hampshire.¹⁴ The Superintendent of Alien Passengers at Boston in 1845 expressed the opinion that the number of foreigners who arrived there by water was twice as great as the number of those who came by land.¹⁵

For about a quarter of a century, from 1817 down to 1842 at least, that stream of Irish emigrants who came out to New Brunswick in the timber ships and then proceeded to New England as quickly as possible, whether by the overland route across Maine or by the boats that came down from St. John, would seem unquestionably to represent the chief immigration that this region received. Writing of the earlier part of this period, Professor William F. Adams — the foremost recent investigator of the subject — declares: "Practically the whole of the [Irish] emigration to New England must have come via

¹⁴ These figures are derived from the very incomplete shipping reports in the *Boston Daily Advertiser*, May 1 to Nov. 1, 1842.

¹⁵ Lemuel Shattuck, *Report to the Committee of the City Council Appointed to Obtain the Census of Boston for the Year 1845* (Boston, 1846), p. 41.

New Brunswick." And as to the latter part of the period he reaffirms: "New Brunswick was still the recognized route to New England." ¹⁶ As late as 1841 the British consul in Boston reported: "As no vessels are employed in the transport of emigrants from the United Kingdom direct to Boston, it is only from the Province of New Brunswick that they come here in any numbers; some stragglers arrive from New York or come down from Canada." ¹⁷ In view of the massive Irish immigration of later times by other routes, it seems an exaggeration to say, with one recent writer, that "Celtic New England is the product of the New Brunswick timber trade." ¹⁸ But it is no exaggeration to say that that trade was the chief source of the mighty increase of the Church here in the time of Bishop Fenwick.

At all events, the New Brunswick route was never without rivals. Occasionally the Boston newspapers reported such items as the arrival of the schooner *Amazon* from Limerick with thirty-four "Irish passengers"; ¹⁹ or the brig *Sisters* from Dublin with fifty-six passengers, "men, women, and children." ²⁰ A more serious competition arose from the Boston-Liverpool route. From an early date Liverpool drew to itself an ever-increasing and finally preponderant share of the Irish emigrant traffic. While at first westbound ships out from that port stopped on the coast of Ireland to collect passengers for America, it was soon found more convenient to transport the emigrants over to Liverpool and embark them from there. Although the great city on the Mersey traded chiefly with New York, it also had a considerable and growing commerce with Boston. It exported to New England coal, salt, iron products, and the other varied manufactures of Lancashire; and if for the eastward voyage a ship could find no cargo at Boston, it could always go on to Charleston, for instance, and pick up a load of cotton. Along with their freight the Liverpool-Boston ships very often

¹⁶ *Ireland and Irish Immigration*, pp. 97, 234.

¹⁷ Sept. 2, 1841 (*Parliamentary Papers*, 1842, XXXI, 314). The first phrase of this statement is not altogether accurate, as will be seen in the sequel.

¹⁸ Hansen, *New England Quarterly*, *op. cit.*, p. 544.

¹⁹ *Daily Advertiser*, June 10, 1823.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, Sept. 3, 1834.

brought immigrants. As the traffic grew, the fare was reduced until by the early forties it was becoming about as cheap to come out to New England by this more direct route as to come by way of St. John, while in various respects it was much more convenient. Of great importance in this connection was the fact that in 1844 Enoch Train, of Boston, started his famous line of sailing packets to Liverpool — large vessels for that time (five to eight hundred tons!); “all first-class, Medford-built — fast-sailing ships.”²¹ This was the first passenger line, in this vicinity at least, which set out to win the immigrant trade. Its considerable success betokened the dawn of a new era: an era in which the Liverpool-Boston route displaced the New Brunswick route as the normal way of getting to New England, and in which the business of transporting immigrants was more and more to pass from the freighters to passenger ships.

III

It is impossible to obtain really reliable and accurate statistics as to the number of Irish immigrants who entered New England during these thirty years.²² It is true that from 1819 on the Federal customs officials were required to send in quarterly returns of the passengers arriving at the several ports, and these returns were then submitted to Congress by the Secretaries of State in a series of printed annual reports. But these official statistics are most unsatisfactory. Often a customs district failed to report; it is known that many immigrants who came by sea slipped in unnoticed; and the large number arriving by land from the British Provinces were left out of the account altogether. Worst of all, the customs officials were per-

²¹ Hamilton A. Hill, *The Trade and Commerce of Boston, 1630-1890* (Boston, 1895), p. 144.

²² Probably the best discussion of the nature and defects of the British and American official statistics bearing upon Irish immigration is to be found in William F. Adams, *op. cit.* (appendix on “Sources for Statistics of Irish Emigration”). He also offers (pp. 413 ff.) his own estimates, based on various corrections of the official data, as to the annual emigration from Ireland to the United States and British North America during this period; estimates which, of course, can claim no high degree of mathematical accuracy, but which, perhaps, afford the best statistical picture we have of the general character of the movement.

fectly capricious in their classifications. Natives of Ireland were sometimes grouped by themselves, and sometimes lumped together indiscriminately with natives of other parts of the United Kingdom under the caption, "Born in Great Britain and Ireland," or even "Born in England" (!). In this latter case, however, since relatively few Englishmen and Scotchmen came here, one may perhaps reason safely that the large majority of the immigrants ascribed to the United Kingdom were Irish. At any rate, defective as they are, it may, perhaps, be of interest to present a résumé of these statistics. They offer the only numerical data we have as to the Irish immigration into New England at this period, and they do afford a rough idea of the dimensions and progress of the movement.

DATA AS TO IRISH IMMIGRANTS ENTERING
THE COUNTRY AT THE PORTS OF NEW ENGLAND ²³

1820.....	275	1833.....	2,467
1821.....	446	1834.....	3,740 ²⁵
1822.....	419	1835.....	4,409 ²⁶
1823.....	529	1836.....	3,042 ²⁴
1824.....	215	1837.....	4,899 ²⁷
1825.....	283	1838.....	1,375 ²⁴
1826.....	380	1839.....	2,541 ²⁴
1827.....	834 ²⁴	1840.....	3,556 ²⁴
1828.....	1,365 ²⁴	1841.....	6,522 ²⁴
1829.....	710 ²⁴	1842.....	8,101 ²⁴
1830.....	884 ²⁴	1843.....	2,820 ²⁸
1831.....	587 ²⁴	1844.....	4,779 ²⁸
1832.....	2,286	1845.....	7,631

²³ From the annual reports of the Secretary of State, published in the *Senate or House Executive Documents*. While these reports are usually based on an administrative year beginning Oct. 1st and ending on Sept. 30th following, the figures have been rearranged here so as to conform to the calendar year.

²⁴ Of this total, part were reported as born in Ireland, and part were reported indiscriminately as born in "Great Britain and Ireland."

²⁵ This includes 2,900 passengers entering in the Passamaquoddy customs district (Eastport), whose native country was left quite unidentified, but who in all probability may be set down as in overwhelming majority Irish.

²⁶ Either from Ireland or, for some quarters or some customs districts, born in "Great Britain and Dependencies."

²⁷ From "Ireland," or "Great Britain and Ireland," or (at Eastport) "country not mentioned."

²⁸ From "Ireland," or "Great Britain," or "England."

churches which were opened in Boston from 1836 onward.³¹ Since the Catholics of the immediately adjacent towns attended the Cathedral and swelled its baptismal registers in the early years, the number of baptisms in the first parishes formed in these towns (St. Mary's, Charlestown, St. John's, East Cambridge, and St. Joseph's, Roxbury) has been added to the totals for the Boston churches to give a fuller picture of the growth in what may be called the metropolitan area.

In fairly close but not complete accordance with the general pattern of emigration from Ireland in that period, these figures seem to indicate a first marked increase of Catholic population in the years 1820 to 1824; a steady, moderate growth from 1825 to 1828; a large influx in 1829, followed by two years of retarded development; a rising tide of immigration from 1832 through 1837; and then, after three years of economic depression, a growth surpassing all previous records during the first half of the 1840's.

We have, in addition, a number of contemporary estimates of the total Catholic population of Boston, which deserve attention, although most of them may be suspected of erring on the side of conservatism. Some of them are as follows:

1820.....	2,120 Catholics ³²
1825.....	5,000 ³³
1829.....	7,040 ³²
1835.....	20,900 ³⁴
1843.....	"About 30,000" ³⁵
1845.....	30,000 ³⁶
1846.....	"At least 32,000" ³⁷

³¹ The baptismal registers of all the Boston churches of that time have been preserved except that of the South Boston parish, first served from St. Augustine's Chapel and then from SS. Peter and Paul's Church. Its first register seems to have perished in the fire of 1848. The annual number of baptisms in this parish, however, can be found in Bishop Fenwick's *Memoranda*, for more than half of the years in question.

³² *The Jesuit*, Jan. 16, 1830. ³³ *Memoranda*, Dec. 31, 1825.

³⁴ From a manuscript of Bishop Fenwick (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

³⁵ Father Mulledy, S.J., to Very Rev. Father Roothan, S.J., Nov. 17, 1843 (*Georgetown Coll. Arch.*, 95-4).

³⁶ Lemuel Shattuck, *Report*, p. 125.

³⁷ *Boston Recorder*, May 21, 1846. Cf. John Gilmary Shea, *History of the Catholic Church*, IV, 150.

From being, presumably, about one twentieth of the population of Boston in 1820, by 1845 the Catholics had become in all probability more than one fourth of it, and they now formed the largest religious body in the city.³⁸

For the increase in the total Catholic population of New England (all of which was still included in the Diocese of Boston until 1843), we also have a few contemporary estimates, most of which emanate from Bishop Fenwick. The more important of them are:

1821-1822.....	3,500 Catholics ³⁹
1825	7,000 ⁴⁰
1830	Not more than 15,000 ⁴¹
1835	40,082 ⁴²
1841	48,878 ⁴³
1843	68,153 ⁴⁴
1844	73,790 ⁴⁵

However uncertain may be the exactitude of these calculations, especially the earlier ones, they illustrate fairly well the cardinal fact that, mainly owing to Irish immigration, the Catholics, who in Bishop Cheverus' time were still numerically an utterly insignificant little group, had by the end of the Fenwick period become one of the larger religious bodies of New England.

IV

It seems indisputable that the majority of the Irish people who came to our shores at that time were poor enough in the

³⁸ Shattuck, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

³⁹ From a tableau of the Metropolitan Province of Baltimore prepared by or for Archbishop Maréchal, printed by (Rev.) Thomas Hughes, S.J., *History of the Society of Jesus in North America. Documents* (London and New York, 1910), p. 959.

⁴⁰ *Memoranda*, Dec. 31, 1825.

⁴¹ Bishop Fenwick, Report to Rome of April 24, 1831 (*Guilday Transcripts*, 2330).

⁴² *Memoranda*, Sept. 4, 1835.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, Dec. 31, 1841.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, Feb. 13, 1843.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, Feb. 27, 1844. This estimate still includes all New England, although Connecticut and Rhode Island were now detached from the Diocese of Boston.

goods of this world, untrained for most of the occupations of an economically advanced society, and destitute of schooling. All this was not, as some Americans were too quick to assume, the result of fatal flaws in the Irish character. It was the natural result of the fact that for centuries the Catholics of Ireland — four fifths of the population — had been subjected to a régime which for protracted, systematic, and ruthless oppression is probably unequaled in the history of any other European nation. They had seen their upper classes exterminated or driven into exile, their lands taken from them, their religion proscribed and persecuted; they had found themselves debarred from all political rights, from the professions, from commerce and industry, from education, and reduced in the main to the lot of the most oppressed peasantry in Western Europe. The whole policy of the government during the centuries of the Penal Laws had been to turn the Catholic Irish into a race of degraded and impotent helots; to make them, as Edmund Burke declared, “a miserable populace, without property, without estimation, without education . . . drawers of water and cutters of turf”⁴⁶ for the alien, Protestant, privileged few.

And if, since the end of the eighteenth century, the Penal Laws had had to be revoked piecemeal, the Irish Catholics continued to be the victims of so much political, religious, economic, and social injustice as would amply excuse the poverty and illiteracy widespread among them — or even far greater sins against the nineteenth-century virtues.

Nevertheless, there is much evidence to show that not a few of the immigrants were fairly well-to-do, and that a still larger number had a certain amount of capital when they came to America.⁴⁷ The expenses of the voyage were ordinarily beyond the means of the poorest classes. In Ireland, as in other lands where large emigration developed, it was noted that it was the more enterprising, industrious, and courageous who emigrated — the classes whom the mother country could least afford to lose.

⁴⁶ *Works* (Boston, 1866), IV, 246.

⁴⁷ Cf. George O'Brien, *The Economic History of Ireland*, pp. 218 ff.; William F. Adams, *Ireland and Irish Immigration*, pp. 195 f.

It required courage, assuredly, to face a transatlantic voyage in those days under the conditions in which most emigrants faced it. The vessels used were generally extremely small from a present-day standpoint: the timber ships probably averaged only around three hundred tons; and we sometimes hear of little craft of sixty or seventy tons carrying immigrants from Ireland to Boston.⁴⁸ In good weather the average passage across the Atlantic seems to have taken about thirty-five to forty days on the sailing ships; but with bad weather the voyage might be dragged out to two or three months. The immigrants usually brought along their own provisions, commonly in the form of a bag of potatoes, and perhaps some oatmeal, bread, and tea, thus adding about two pounds to the cost of the trip. Apart from the fortunate few who could afford a "cabin" passage in the better ships, emigrants traveled in what were already called "steerage" accommodations, which, needless to say, were of the simplest and rudest kind. The worst evil was overcrowding. During most of this period the British laws on this subject were so lax as to evoke protests that conditions were allowed on emigrant ships that were not tolerated in the days of the African slave trade. And these lax laws were not adequately enforced. Hence it too often happened that a dense throng of men, women, and children, with all their belongings, were packed together in the smallest possible space between decks, in a compartment not more than five and a half feet high, and mainly filled with tiers of bunks — a compartment which for weeks would have to serve as the common living room, dining room, recreation room, dormitory, and hospital. Light and ventilation might come only from the hatchways, which in bad weather might remain closed for a week at a time. At the best, the conditions were trying; when the storms came and seasickness developed, they were frightful; and if, as frequently happened, some epidemic, such as fever or cholera, broke out, they were tragic beyond description. To these sufferings might be

⁴⁸ In 1818 the *Catherine* of Waterford, of 64 tons, brought 67 passengers to Boston, and the *Ann*, of Cork, of 76 tons, brought 60 passengers to Boston (Adams, *op. cit.*, p. 114 and note).

added the sad experiences which emigrants so often had with the sharpers and swindlers who thronged around them just before they embarked or just after they landed; with ship captains who deliberately delayed sailing or prolonged the voyage in order to force passengers to buy provisions at exorbitant prices; or with physical mistreatment by brutal or drunken sailors. All things considered, those who had the physical and moral stamina to face successfully the ordeal of the Atlantic passage under such conditions showed at least as much courage as the passengers in the *Mayflower*, and were not unworthy to take a hand in building up Church and State in the New World.⁴⁹

Arrived in the United States, the large majority of Irish immigrants had at first to seek employment as unskilled laborers. Fortunately, opportunities were numerous because of the multitude of "public works" then being carried on. After the canal-building so actively prosecuted during the twenties, came the era of railroad-building, which began in 1830, and which is most closely connected with the spread of the Church through the interior of New England. Each line under construction brought in a host of Irishmen — often into localities where Catholics had hitherto been little known — who built themselves rude, temporary cabins or shanties and ate at a common table. Hard on the heels of these railroad gangs came missionary priests, eager to bring the Sacraments and ministrations of the Church wherever any considerable group of Catholics was gathered together. Once the "job" was finished, many of the laborers usually settled in the towns or villages through which the work had progressed; and the line of the new iron highway also marked a line of new Catholic mission stations and churches.

The earliest railroads chartered in New England were the lines from Boston to Lowell (1830), to Providence, and to Worcester (both in 1831), all of which were opened to traffic in 1835. Two years later work was begun on the Western Rail-

⁴⁹ Cf. Edwin C. Guillet, *The Great Migration: The Atlantic Crossing by Sailing Ships Since 1770* (Toronto, London, and New York, 1937); and Helen I. Cowan, *British Emigration to British North America, 1783-1837* (University of Toronto Studies: History and Economics, vol. IV, no. 2, Toronto, 1928).

road, which was to run from Worcester to Albany; by 1839 trains could pass as far as Springfield; and December 27, 1841, the Boston City Government journeyed to the New York State capital for the festivities that celebrated the completion of the route.

The Eastern Railroad was constructed from East Boston via Lynn, Salem, and Newburyport to Portsmouth in the years 1837 to 1840, with branches to Marblehead and, later, Gloucester. In almost the same years (1836-1841) the Boston and Maine laid down a rival route to the north by way of Andover, Haverhill, and Dover, New Hampshire. Both lines completed their connection with the metropolis of Maine by means of the Portland, Saco, and Portsmouth Railroad, built in 1841-1842, which was at first leased jointly by them, but later passed under the control of the Eastern Railroad.

In a northwesterly direction, the Boston and Lowell pushed an arm into New Hampshire by the subsidiary Lowell and Nashua line, erected in 1838; while the Concord Railroad in 1841-1842 extended the connection from Nashua to the New Hampshire State capital. The much-delayed Fitchburg Railroad, started in 1836, opened service from West Cambridge to Fitchburg only in 1845, and was not carried into Boston until 1848. The proposed continuation of this line into the Green Mountain State and even to Canada through the Vermont and Massachusetts Railroad was hardly more than begun in 1846.

In southern New England the iron trails multiplied very rapidly. There was the Old Colony Railroad, opened from Boston to Plymouth in 1845; the Fall River Railroad, built in the years 1844-1846; the Taunton and New Bedford branches of the Boston and Providence system (built in 1835-1836, and 1839-1840); the lines from Worcester to Norwich (completed by 1840) and to Providence (started in 1845); the railway from Providence to Stonington, Connecticut, constructed in 1837; the New Haven and Hartford Railroad, opened between those two cities in 1839, and continued by 1844 to Springfield; and the Berkshire, Housatonic, and Pittsfield-North Adams lines in western Massachusetts, built between 1840 and 1846.

Another kind of public works for which immigrant labor was much in demand was the improvements that were being made in the cities, and especially in Boston.

Down to the beginning of the nineteenth century, Boston had kept almost unchanged her configuration of colonial times: a small peninsula, less than three miles long and hardly more than a mile wide, connected with the mainland only by a very narrow isthmus ("Roxbury Neck") along what is now Washington Street, the available space within these exiguous confines being further reduced by bristling hills, marshes, and indentations of the sea. In the next fifty years the cramped and cabined town at last began to expand its area and transform its appearance in truly remarkable fashion. The annexation of South Boston (1804); the reclamation of the hitherto neglected and almost uninhabited "Noddle's Island" and its development by the East Boston Company, from 1833 on, as a thriving shipping, shipbuilding, and railway centre; the filling-in of the Mill Pond, on the north side of the city (1804-1829), to furnish the soil for which Beacon Hill was cut away to half its original height and other hills were much reduced; the filling-in of the West Cove (west of Charles Street), from 1803 on, of the Town Cove (east of Faneuil Hall), from 1823 to 1826, and of the South Cove (in the neighborhood of the present South Station), between 1836 and 1839 — these changes were among the salient features of this expansion. But the enterprise that was to be most decisive for the future growth of the city was the building of the Mill Dam, with a highway upon it, from the end of Beacon Street (at Charles Street) to Sewall's Point, in Brookline (completed in 1821), enclosing a great part of the Back Bay which had hitherto almost separated Boston from the mainland. It was hoped that in the "receiving basin" thus formed a host of mills would spring up to utilize the power to be derived from the tidal waters. This industrial development failed to materialize, but in one way or another more and more of the receiving basin came to be filled in, foreshadowing at least that immense transformation which the second half of the century was to see: the turning of the whole Back Bay into "made

land." Already by the early thirties the isthmus leading to Roxbury had been very substantially widened. By filling in east of Washington Street as far as Front Street (Harrison Avenue) and west of Washington as far as Tremont Street and south to Camden Street, a whole new South End of the city had been created.⁵⁰

It has been said that it was to construct the Mill Dam that "Irish laborers were for the first time expressly imported into this country,"⁵¹ in 1818. At any rate, those laborers did the heavy work in nearly all the public improvements enumerated above from that date onward. Indeed, the fact that Boston early came to have so large an Irish population must be due in great part to the unusual number of public works that were carried on in that city during this period.

Elsewhere it was particularly the development of manufacturing that called for the Irishman's labor: to dig canals and build dams or factories in older industrial centres like Lowell, Fall River, or Cabotville, or in the newer centres, such as Lawrence or Holyoke, Massachusetts, Nashua and Manchester, New Hampshire, or Augusta and Bangor, Maine.

For a great part of the immigrants arduous jobs of this kind were but stepping-stones to other types of work. One mode of escape was to find employment as an operative in a factory. In Rhode Island and southeastern Massachusetts, the Irish seem to have been admitted as factory hands at a very early date. But there was a large group of textile manufacturing centres, controlled by virtually the same group of Boston capitalists (Lowell, Cabotville, Holyoke, Dover, Manchester, Nashua, etc.), where paternalism and the boarding-house system reigned, and the Yankee farmers' daughters were long the preferred type of operatives. It was only around the middle of the forties that the idealism of these employers began to succumb before the cheapness of Irish labor, and Celtic men and women began to dis-

⁵⁰ The transformation of Boston is well surveyed by Edward Stanwood in Justin Winsor, *The Memorial History of Boston*, IV (Boston, 1881), chap. II, and by Nathaniel B. Shurtleff, *A Typographical and Historical Description of Boston* (3rd ed.: Boston, 1891).

⁵¹ Winsor, *op. cit.*, III, 575.

place the native farm girls. It must be admitted that the factories thereby lost the intellectual atmosphere created by the young females who had memorized their favorite poems and hymns as they tended the looms and spindles; and literature was bereft of the periodic enrichments which it had received from the *Lowell Offering* or the *Cabotville Olive Leaf and Factory Girls' Repository*. In fact the whole paternalistic system of the early years collapsed with the coming of the "foreign" mill-hands. But there are strong grounds for doubting whether even in their best days these model communities had ever been quite such industrial utopias as they were often depicted; and in any case the idyll could scarcely be expected to last.⁵²

An uncertain number of the immigrants settled on farms; at first usually as "help," for which there was much demand because of the exodus of the native youth to the West; and later, perhaps, as tenants or owners. It has been said that by the early fifties foreign (i.e., mainly Irish) farm laborers predominated in the eastern counties of Massachusetts and were becoming common in the western part of the State.⁵³

Nevertheless, to a degree amazing in a people who at home had been overwhelmingly rural and agricultural, the Irish preferred to settle in cities, towns, or villages. There those who could escape from, or had never passed through, the public works stage and who did not enter a factory, generally set up as tradesmen or artisans. The Boston directories of the late thirties and the forties show persons with Irish names engaged in a large variety of pursuits: as clothiers, tailors, hatters, shoeworkers, grocers, bakers, tavern-keepers, carpenters, masons, blacksmiths, coopers, watchmakers, printers, etc., etc. And Irish Catholic school-teachers, lawyers, doctors, or manufacturers were by no means rarities.

⁵² John R. Commons *et al.*, *A Documentary History of American Industrial Society*, VIII (Cleveland, 1910), 133-151; Melvin T. Copeland, *The Cotton Manufacturing Industry of the United States* (Cambridge, 1917), p. 13; Vera Shlakman, *Economic History of a Factory Town* (Smith College Studies in History, XX, 1934-1935), pp. 58, 139; Harriet H. Robinson, *Loom and Spindle, or Life Among the Early Mill Girls* (New York and Boston, 1898), pp. 12 ff., 46.

⁵³ Hansen, *New England Quarterly*, II (1929), 547.

At all events, the lot of the majority of the immigrants, particularly in their first years here, must have been hard in the extreme. On the public works they were called upon to toil fifteen hours a day in return for a wage of often no more than fifty or sixty cents.⁵⁴

In the mills the working day was commonly from twelve to fourteen hours, but sometimes even fifteen to sixteen hours were required. In the cotton factories of Cabotville work started at 5 A.M. and continued until 7:30 P.M., with only two half-hour interruptions for meals. While it is more difficult to generalize about wages, it is certain that they were miserably low, and were cut several times during the forties, as immigrant labor became more common, even while the manufacturers were rolling up profits of twenty to forty per cent. All efforts to secure legislative action to protect the health or the other most elementary rights of the workers, and especially to establish the Ten-Hour Day, then the great demand of the infant labor movement, were regularly thwarted by the influence of the capitalists. It was not without some justice that the *Boston Pilot* protested that whilst the wealthy nabob was pocketing his fat dividends, 'he was putting the screws on the honest laborer, and compelling him to work from thirteen to seventeen hours per day, without a living wage,' threatening to reduce him "to a worse condition than that of a Russian serf";⁵⁵ and that it was ironical that men, women, and children should be thus victimized "in our own dear New England where we have anti-Slavery societies and a world of sympathy for everything but the wrongs of our laborers."⁵⁶

Another evil from which many immigrants suffered was the

⁵⁴ *Pilot*, March 15, 1845. Cf. James Truslow Adams, *New England in the Republic, 1776-1850* (Boston, 1926), pp. 388 f.; Shlakman, *op. cit.*, p. 49; Adams, *Ireland and Irish Immigration*, pp. 178, 338, 340.

⁵⁵ Jan. 28, 1843.

⁵⁶ Dec. 17, 1842. The literature about hours, wages, and conditions of labor is, of course, enormous, but for the statements advanced above reference may be made to the following works: Felix Flügel and Harold U. Faulkner, *Readings in the Economic and Social History of the United States* (New York, 1929), p. 257; John R. Commons et al., *American Industrial Society*, VIII, 133-151; Shlakman, *op. cit.*, p. 56; James Truslow Adams, *op. cit.*, pp. 341 f., 390 f.; Arthur H. Cole, *The American Wool Manufacture* (2 vols.: Cambridge, 1926), I, 243 f.

wretched lodgings with which, through their poverty or the miserly wages paid them, they had to put up, in the most dilapidated and overcrowded parts of our cities. The teeming tenements of the Broad Street section of Boston may not have deserved all the denunciations which they received from the newspapers, but they had an appalling death-rate. From data collected about the Catholic population of Boston in the years 1833 to 1845, it has been estimated that of every five children born at that time scarcely two reached the age of five years.⁵⁷

In view of such facts, all the greater must be our admiration for the courage, the resolution, the grit with which the Irish immigrants faced their situation. They did work of the hardest kind, which needed to be done and which, without them, might not, perhaps, have been carried through on any such ample scale; and out of their niggardly compensation, through strenuous self-denial, they managed to save enough to help their kinsfolk to come over from Ireland and to enable their children to enjoy a better life than had been vouchsafed to them. Of their achievements in such respects, the *Boston Transcript* very justly wrote:

The Irish portion of our population . . . has been very much abused. They are not the idle, sloth-loving, improvident, and intemperate people they are represented and too generally believed to be. They are, as a class, industrious and hard-working. Let the unprejudiced look to our public improvements, the rapidly expanding confines of our city, our new wharves, our bridges and railroads. Who built them? Yankee enterprise furnished the capital, but who supplied the labor, the indispensable muscular strength? Who dug down the hills and filled up the valleys? . . . Who laid the foundations of Central Wharf? Irishmen. The Western Avenue (the Mill Dam)? Irishmen. And Commercial Wharf? Irishmen. The Providence Railroad? Irishmen. . . .

How little, too, do they know of the Irish who call them improvident! We speak of them as a class. One fact is worth a thousand theories. The amount deposited at the Savings

⁵⁷ Shattuck, *Report*, pp. 155 f.

Bank is nearly two millions of dollars. One would suppose that the largest portion of this capital belonged to the industrious penny-saving Yankee. Not so. The "improvident" Irish own five eighths of it. . . . There is an unkind, an unjustifiable prejudice, entertained by very many citizens, of which we are ashamed.⁵⁸

One especially appealing characteristic of the Irish was their immense enthusiasm for the United States as the land of freedom and of opportunity. Of this one who knew them well, writes:

Anyone who has ever travelled in Ireland, not merely with eyes to see her wretchedness, but also with ears to hear her aspirations, must have remarked the enthusiastic feeling that exists toward America among all classes save the Orange aristocrats. By the less elevated ranks, the small farmers, artisans, and peasantry, the United States are considered as a sort of half-way stage to Heaven, a paradise whither some of their kindred or friends of almost every family have already repaired; and whence they receive accounts that, even when unexaggerated or falling short of the truth, paint this new-found home, in comparison with their own domestic misery, as the very *El Dorado* of Spanish romance. Infants suck in, as it were, with their mother's milk this passionate admiration of the New World. They are cradled in eulogiums on its excellence. . . . The boy is taught to venerate its greatness; and the man believes, talks of, and sighs for its far-off shores, with a fervid admiration that knows no bounds.⁵⁹

Nor could the cool reception and the hard knocks that many of the immigrants encountered on reaching our shores destroy this enthusiasm. "The Irishman," says the same writer, "has no feelings towards America save love and loyalty."⁶⁰ Apart from the matter of religion, probably no other immigrant race was so naturally predisposed and so ready to fit into the general pattern of American life.

⁵⁸ March 20, 1835.

⁵⁹ "The Irish in America," *North American Review*, LII (1841), 202 ff. The unsigned author of this article was T. C. Grattan, a son of the famous Irish statesman Henry Grattan, and at that time British consul in Boston.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 204.

But the finest quality of the Irish Catholic immigrants was their unswerving loyalty to the faith of their fathers. Deeply inbred in the race by a thousand glorious years of Catholic life in the Middle Ages and tried in the fire of persecution during the centuries of the Penal Laws, that loyalty was to be demonstrated in the most eloquent and often in touching fashion in the land of their adoption. Their faith was their greatest pride, their greatest strength, and their greatest consolation. The boundless generosity with which they and the generations of Irish immigrants who came after them gave to their Church from their usually scanty means was little short of heroic, and the network of Catholic churches and institutions which over-spreads New England today is the marvelous result of their faith and grit and self-denial. For the Church here it was of incalculable advantage that its members were to be drawn mainly from a nation which assuredly yields to no other in the strength and fervor of its Catholicity.

What Catholic immigration other than Irish there was into New England during this period was very small in point of numbers, is little known, and can be passed over briefly.

Some French-Canadians apparently began to drift across the border into the States of northern New England from a very early date, perhaps from the close of the American Revolution. They came at first, ordinarily, to work as farm-hands or lumberjacks. This infiltration was most marked in Vermont, especially in the Burlington and St. Albans districts, but there are traces of it also in New Hampshire and in Maine as far as Bangor. It extended to some localities in southern New England as soon as the rising factories began to offer prospects of employment. The first three French-Canadian families arrived at Woonsocket, Rhode Island, between 1815 and 1821, and by 1846 there are said to have been 332 Franco-Canadians in that thriving industrial centre.⁶¹ About 1820 they began to appear at Worcester, where henceforth their number waxed slowly but steadily.⁶² At Southbridge, Massachusetts, where important

⁶¹ Marie Louise Bonier, *Débuts de la colonie franco-américaine de Woonsocket, R.I.* (Framingham, 1920), pp. 74-79.

⁶² Alexandre Belisle, *Histoire de la presse franco-américaine* (Worcester, 1911), p. 10 and note.

textile and other manufactures existed, a Canadian colony was started in 1832, which by 1850 numbered thirty families.⁶³ These examples may suffice to show the still small dimensions of this immigration, which was nowhere large or concentrated enough to warrant establishing a Franco-Canadian parish except at Burlington, Vermont: and there, as will be seen later, the first attempt was short-lived.

The only place in New England which attracted any considerable body of German Catholics was Boston. The pioneers were, apparently, the brothers Matthias, Melchior, and Sebastian Krämer, who arrived about the year 1825⁶⁴ and set up a variety store, which developed into the largest New England emporium of "Nuremberg wares" and also became the first rendezvous of Germans landing in the city. This immigration increased until by the early fifties it was estimated that there were three thousand Germans in Boston, chiefly laborers, artisans, and factory workers,⁶⁵ about equally divided, apparently, between Catholics and Protestants. The long and arduous attempt to found a German Catholic parish here will be related in the sequel.⁶⁶

Very few Italians were as yet coming to New England. We hear of some Italian seamen who might be considered domiciled at Boston, such as the famous Captain Giovanni Dominis, whose voyages to the Northwest coast did much to explore, and to call American attention to, the Oregon country. Italian musicians were not uncommon, such as the violinist Luigi Ostinelli, who for years charmed Boston and other New England audiences by his "masterly scintillations of genius, fancy, and taste." There were some Italian business men, preëminent

⁶³ Félix Gatineau, *Histoire des Franco-Américains de Southbridge, Massachusetts* (Framingham, 1919) — an unusually good local history.

⁶⁴ At least "Mr. Kremer, variety store," first appears in the *Boston Directory* that year.

⁶⁵ Franz (von) Löher, *Geschichte und Zustände der Deutschen in Amerika* (2te Ausg., Göttingen, 1855), pp. 296 f.

⁶⁶ The beginnings of the German Catholic colony in Boston, as well as the history of their old and venerated parish (Holy Trinity), are admirably told in the volume *Geschichte der deutschen katholischen hl. Dreifältigkeits-Gemeinde in Boston, Mass.* (Boston, 1894).

among whom was the Marquis Niccolo Reggio, born in Smyrna of an old Genoese family, who came to Boston in 1832 and became a notable figure as a foremost importer of Levantine wares to all New England, owner of many vessels, consul of many nations, recipient of many orders and distinctions, and as one of Boston's richest and most exemplary Catholics.⁶⁷ By 1842 there were enough Italians here to form a benevolent society of their own.⁶⁸

Of Catholic immigrants of other nationalities there was as yet scarcely a trace.

⁶⁷ Giovanni Schiavo, *The Italians in America Before the Civil War* (New York, 1934), pp. 222 ff.

⁶⁸ The little pamphlet entitled *Costituzione della Società italiana di benevolenza, residente in Boston*, is to be found in the Harvard Library.

CHAPTER VI

ACCELERATED GROWTH (1831-1838)

I

CHIEFLY AS A RESULT of the quickening pace of immigration from 1829 on, the middle period of Bishop Fenwick's episcopate saw a remarkable growth of the Church. His correspondence and journal of that time are full of joyful comments on the striking increase of his flock within a very few years. Thus he wrote in 1835:

The faith is constantly spreading, and its progress has been so rapid, especially in the city of Boston, that all who have witnessed it are astonished. This city ten years ago contained scarcely ten thousand Catholics; but now, on the contrary, the number rises to at least twenty thousand. Similarly, a very few years ago the name of Catholic was scarcely heard outside the environs of Boston and the towns immediately adjacent; but today they are found, and in considerable numbers, in all parts of the six states which compose the diocess.¹

There were towns like Providence or Bangor, he reported, which now had nearly a thousand Catholics, whereas six years before there were hardly a score.² At Lowell the increase was so great that within a few years, he believed, the Catholics would outnumber all the other denominations put together. Vermont was "abounding in Catholics," scattered through every part of the State.³ Churches were no sooner built than they became too small to hold their congregations. And from almost every part of New England the cry was constantly being raised for the building of new churches and the sending of priests.

¹ Bishop Fenwick to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, Aug. 28, 1835 (*Annales de l'Association de la Propagation de la Foi*, VIII [1836], p. 189).

² Letter to the same Society, Dec. 13, 1836 (*op. cit.*, X [1837], 148).

³ To the same Society, Aug. 29, 1837 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

Unable as yet to provide a seminary of his own (in spite of efforts to be described later on), the Bishop was at least able to support an ever-increasing number of candidates for the priesthood ⁴ at institutions outside the Diocese: at Montreal, Chambly, Emmitsburg, Baltimore, and Georgetown. In 1837 a brilliant young man named John Bernard Fitzpatrick became the first Boston clerical student to be sent to Europe to complete his education, at the Sulpician Seminary in Paris. As the upsurge of Catholicity in New England became manifest, a growing number of priests from other American dioceses or from abroad arrived here to offer their services: and such was Bishop Fenwick's dire need of clergymen that he readily accepted most of them — too readily, it often proved, for not a few of these volunteers turned out to be unsatisfactory. In all, twenty-nine priests entered the service of the Diocese during these years. Sixteen of them had been trained and were ordained for Boston, while thirteen were men already ordained who came in from outside. It is notable that of these twenty-nine not one was a native American. Twenty-four were born in Ireland, most of them in the two dioceses of Ardagh and Kilmore: one was a Scot, two were Frenchmen, and two Austrians.

Through this extensive augmentation, somewhat reduced by occasional withdrawals of priests, the corps of diocesan clergy was virtually doubled during this period, increasing from fourteen in 1830 to twenty-six in 1838.

II

If one church had hitherto sufficed for the Catholics of Boston, it now proved necessary to organize not less than four new congregations in the city.

The first of these enterprises — a church for the North and West Ends — was undertaken in 1831, but was long held back by difficulties in raising funds and in finding a suitable site for which a clear title could be given. At the beginning of 1834

⁴ While he had only six such candidates in 1830, by 1837-1838 the number had risen to eighteen or nineteen.



OLD ST. MARY'S, CHARLESTOWN



OLD ST. MARY'S,
ENDICOTT ST., BOSTON



OLD ST. PATRICK'S,
NORTHAMPTON ST., BOSTON

the Bishop at last purchased for \$6,800 four lots on the corner of Cooper and Endicott (then called Pond) Streets, and the work of construction was begun, under his very direct personal supervision. On May 22, 1836, he had the satisfaction of dedicating St. Mary's Church. It was a severely plain brick structure, looking not unlike a warehouse save for the cupola and cross over the front; but it could seat eight hundred people, and it straightway became one of the most important — and densely thronged — churches of the Diocese. Its first pastors were the Rev. William Wiley (May, 1836, to April, 1837), Rev. James McDermott (June to August, 1837), and Rev. Michael Healy (July, 1838, to July, 1840), with the Rev. Patrick O'Beirne serving throughout these years as assistant or priest in charge.

To meet the needs of the rapidly growing population of South Boston, the Bishop decided to enlarge the picturesque little chapel there, which had hitherto scarcely been used save in connection with interments in the adjacent cemetery. Extended from thirty to seventy-six feet in length, though still only eighteen feet wide, and equipped with sacristies and choir, the new St. Augustine's Church was dedicated October 16, 1831. Intermittently served at first from the Cathedral, the church began to have resident priests two years later. Its earliest pastors were the Rev. James Drummond (June, 1833, to April, 1834), the Rev. Thomas Lynch (April, 1834, to October, 1836), and the Rev. John Mahony, who died suddenly, deeply regretted by his people, December 29, 1839.

The third new church was to serve the now greatly enlarged South End, and also the neighboring town of Roxbury, whose industries employed many Catholics. Built on land purchased in 1835 on Northampton Street, in what was then the southernmost part of Boston, St. Patrick's Church was dedicated December 11, 1836. The plain brick building then erected, instead of the Gothic edifice originally planned, is still standing and still in use, ranking next to St. Augustine's Chapel, South Boston, as the oldest example in the Diocese of the Catholic churches of the early days. Its first pastor, Father Thomas

Lynch, was to remain in charge until his death in 1870. There are few more attractive figures among the priests of the olden times. A tall and strikingly handsome young man from the County Cavan and Maynooth College, he had volunteered for the American missions, finished his studies in Bishop Fenwick's house seminary, and been ordained in 1833. He was a fine classical and Gaelic scholar, an excellent preacher, a model of devotion to all pastoral duties, but his grand passion was the poor. A lifetime of boundless charity towards them, exemplified particularly at the time when the Great Famine drove thousands of his fellow countrymen to Boston in dire distress, was to win for him a name held in benediction.⁵

In the spring of 1835, Bishop Fenwick discovered that there were in Boston and Roxbury over two hundred German Catholics for whom some special provision seemed required. Accordingly, Father John Raffener, of New York, "the apostle of his compatriots in the East,"⁶ was brought to Boston for a short stay both that year and the next in order that these Germans might fulfill their Easter duties. By 1836 the Germans began to raise funds to support a resident priest; it was hoped that they might soon build a church of their own; and meantime they were organized into a separate congregation, meeting at assigned hours at the Cathedral. But the first experiences with resident German pastors were discouraging. The first pastor, the Rev. Franz De Sales Hoffmann, a scholar of some distinction, resigned after two months (August-October, 1836). The second, the Rev. Joseph E. Freygang, proved to be an unworthy priest, who, after stirring up fierce contention in the little flock in Boston (December, 1836, to December, 1837), went out to Ohio and tried to start a schismatic German church. The third, the Rev. Andreas Bernhard Smolnikar, an Austrian Benedictine, soon revealed himself as suffering from delusional insanity, imagining that he was a divine ambassador, sent to reform the Church and reunite all Christendom on the

⁵ *Pilot*, April 9, 1870; *Boston Post*, May 18, 1896; article on "Catholics in Boston" in the scrapbook of the Bostonian Society.

⁶ J. G. Shea, *History of the Catholic Church*, III, 486.

basis of special revelations vouchsafed to him.⁷ After his dismissal (May 7, 1838) the German congregation of Boston were left for some years without a priest of their own, except for periodical visits of the good Father Raffener.

Next to Boston, Lowell presented one of the most striking cases of rapid Catholic increase. The first Catholic church, St. Patrick's, was dedicated July 3, 1831; but within five years it had to be substantially rebuilt and doubled in size. It served, indeed, not merely a feverishly expanding community — and during this decade the "town" of six thousand grew into a "city" of over twenty thousand — but also the Catholics scattered for many miles around, who streamed into Lowell, to attend to their religious duties, by stage-coach, in wagons, on horseback, and on foot.⁸ Father Mahony, who down to 1831 had cared for both Lowell and Salem, gave up the latter post after the dedication of St. Patrick's in order to centre his attention upon the more important place. He remained in charge until 1836, assisted by the Rev. John Curtin (1833-1834) and the Rev. Peter Connolly (1834-1836). Next came the unfortunate pastorate of the Rev. Edward McCool, another priest suffering from mental derangement; after which the parish was entrusted (1837) to Father James McDermott, perhaps the ablest of the early pastors of Lowell, who was to spend the rest of his life in upbuilding the Church in that city.

At Salem Father William Wiley, pastor from 1831 to 1834, infused new life into the little congregation by completing and handsomely equipping St. Mary's Church, by his zealous discharge of all pastoral duties, by his talents as a preacher, and by his unusual success in winning converts. His successor, Father John D. Brady (1834-1841), distinguished himself by

⁷ Smolnikar's own account of his life, opinions, revelations, and of his experiences in Boston is contained in that fantastic and grisly book, *Denkwürdige Ereignisse im Leben des Andreas Bernardus Smolnikar* . . . (Boston, 1838) — a work which contains the clearest proofs of his dementia. He continued to pour forth books and pamphlets in this country for many years — certainly no other clergyman connected with the Diocese of Boston in Bishop Fenwick's time published so much; and it is sad to relate that this crazy ex-priest received not a little encouragement and support among Protestants.

⁸ George F. O'Dwyer, *The Irish Catholic Genesis of Lowell*, p. 20.

missionary activity. The Salem parish, which then included the whole of Essex County, was at last beginning to attract large numbers of Irish immigrants through incipient industrialism and through the building of the Eastern Railroad. In Salem itself the Catholic population seems to have risen from about two hundred in 1831 to about one thousand in 1838. Outside that city a whole series of mission stations was developed at this time, in part by Father Wiley, but chiefly by Father Brady. At Lynn, the most important of them, the first Mass was said on October 22, 1833, by Father Wiley in the house of Lawrence Birney on Waterhill Street.⁹ It is certain that from 1836 onward Lynn was constantly visited by the pastor of Salem, and Mass was ordinarily said there in private houses about once a month. Newburyport, which had scarcely seen a priest since Bishop Cheverus' last visit in 1823, was attended by Fathers Wiley and Brady from 1831 on, until in 1836 it was made a mission of Dover. Ipswich, Saugus, Marblehead, and Gloucester were other mission stations which began to be visited in the years 1836-1837.

III

Vermont and New Hampshire presented a vaster theatre for the zeal of pioneering priests. Vermont was "abounding in Catholics," as Dr. Fenwick said, in the sense that they were cropping up in almost every community; but, in view of the utter lack of large towns, they were seldom found anywhere in sufficient numbers to warrant the establishment of a church. There was need, therefore, of rugged priests with the true apostolic spirit who, disdaining all ease and comfort, would be perpetually upon the road, circulating about the whole State, pursuing the stray sheep into every village and mountain nook, and periodically attending every little group of Catholics.

For such work Father Jeremiah O'Callaghan, whom Bishop

⁹Despite the much-repeated story that this first Mass was said in 1835 by Father Wiley (although in that year he was nowhere in the vicinity), the date given in the text would seem to be well established by an article in the *Catholic Observer*, of Boston, of May 31, 1849.

Fenwick had installed here in 1830, was exactly cut out. A little fiery and quick-tempered, lacking in tact and polish, and extreme in his views on some questions — all this he may have been; but he more than made up for such defects by his extraordinary energy and activity, his wisdom and foresight (on most subjects), his knack of getting to the hearts of his own fellow countrymen, his self-denying spirit, and his love and devotion to his task. It was, perhaps, utopian, but it appealed to people that, in his hatred of all the evils connected with money, he would allow no pew rents and no seat-money to be taken up in his churches, and would accept no fees for any service he rendered: he subsisted only through voluntary collections taken up three times a year. Of his love for his work he wrote that "this precarious and toilsome mission in hilly Vermont was to me, who had learned patience through suffering, the same thing as laboring in Paradise."¹⁰

Through much of this period his "parish" was the whole State of Vermont. He built the first church at Burlington, St. Mary's, which was dedicated by Bishop Fenwick September 9, 1832. Under his stimulation a second church was established, at Castleton, in 1836, when the few Catholics there bought a lot with a carpenter's shop upon it, which they converted into a chapel. He organized little congregations at, and periodically visited, St. Albans, Swanton, Fairfield, Montpelier, St. Johnsbury, Vergennes, Middlebury, Brandon, Pittsford, Rutland, Poultney, Wallingford, Tinmouth, Dorset, and Bennington. Few, indeed, are the larger communities in the western half of Vermont which do not have the tradition that their first Mass was said by Father O'Callaghan. But one State could not suffice for the zeal of such a man. His apostolic forays frequently carried him into northern New York, as well, and into western Massachusetts. At North Adams, in the latter State, a very definite tradition has it that he said the first Mass about 1835 at the house of Michael Ryan;¹¹ and it is certain that early in 1836 he bought land for an intended church in

¹⁰ *Usury, Funds, and Banks* (Burlington, 1834), p. 63.

¹¹ Rev. John J. McCoy, in *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 621.

that town.¹² At Pittsfield, when detained over Sunday while traveling, he learned that there were a few Catholics in the place, and gathering this little flock of ten or twelve in the house of a man named Daley, he offered the Holy Sacrifice for the first time in the chief town of Berkshire County (1835).¹³

In order to lighten the labors of this valiant missionary, Bishop Fenwick sent auxiliaries when and as he could; but most of them remained but a short time. Rev. Simon Walsh had charge of the missions of southern Vermont from October, 1833, to June, 1834. Rev. John Brady, ordained along with his namesake John D. Brady in 1833, was sent to revive the parish at Claremont, New Hampshire, and to attend the Catholics in eastern Vermont; but after a two years' effort he obtained his recall on the ground that from these lean missions he could scarcely get enough support to keep body and soul together.¹⁴ The Canadians in and around Burlington, for whom the Bishop hoped ultimately to provide a separate church, had for a time at least a separate pastor, a French priest, Father Auguste Petit-homme (May, 1834, to October, 1835). Fathers Patrick O'Beirne and Peter Connolly successively took over the missions of northern Vermont for brief periods (1835-1836). Left alone again in his vast field for nearly a year, Father O'Callaghan at last found a colleague strikingly akin to himself in character, spirit, and merits, who was henceforth to divide the missions of the State with him for nearly twenty years.

This was Father John B. Daly, a Franciscan just received into the Diocese, who in 1837 took charge of southern Vermont and of Claremont. He, too, was somewhat eccentric, impetuous, and blunt, but withal a lovable character and a magnificent missionary priest. His boast was that he never slept more than one night under the same roof. His missionary tours quickly extended not only throughout southern Vermont, but to North Adams and Pittsfield on the side,¹⁵ and through much of western New Hampshire on the other.

¹² *Memoranda*, Feb. 9, 1836.

¹³ J. E. G. Smith, *The History of Pittsfield* (Springfield, 1876), pp. 460-461.

¹⁴ *Memoranda*, Sept. 14, 18, 1835.

¹⁵ The *Vermont Gazette*, of Bennington, e.g., announced May 8, 1838, that

In eastern New Hampshire the one pivot of Catholicity was the Dover parish. Attended by the Rev. Michael Healy (November, 1830, to July, 1831), then by Father Wiley from Salem, and next by Rev. Constantine Lee (September, 1833, to April, 1834), this church at last gained a permanent and a very excellent pastor in Father Patrick Canavan, appointed in July, 1834, who was to spend here the rest of his active life. How widely the missions connected with Dover spread over the eastern part of the State, it is difficult to say, because of the loss of the early records of the church; but it is clear that Father Canavan visited Portsmouth and Newburyport about once a month from 1836 on, and it is likely that he occasionally attended Great Falls (Somersworth), South Berwick, Maine, and other neighboring places.¹⁶

IV

Maine, with its vast unsettled regions and undeveloped resources, was still, in the fourth decade of the century, a land of promise, vying in its attractions for settlers with the Middle West, and growing in population more rapidly than any other New England State save Massachusetts. More intensely than most other parts of the country, it felt the vicissitudes that marked that decade: the exuberant prosperity of the early thirties — this was the time of the great Maine Land Speculation — and the depression that began with the panic of 1837. These ups and downs were reflected to some degree in the fortunes of the Catholic Church.

Among the parishes already established, that in the sedate and conservative city of Portland grew in steady but not spectacular fashion. Its founder, Father Ffrench, resigned in the autumn of 1838, in order to return to Ireland to settle up the "debt of honor" which had long weighed upon his mind. He was succeeded as pastor by the young and able Father Patrick Flood.

Father Daly would be at North Adams on the 18th and 19th, and would say Mass at Pittsfield on the 20th.

¹⁶ *The Catholic Church in New England*, I, 667, 672, 547; *Sacred Heart Review*, XVIII (Nov. 27, 1897), ill. suppl., p. 6.

When Bishop Fenwick visited North Whitefield in 1832, he was surprised to find that this, the most purely rural congregation in his Diocese, had also become one of the largest. There were about twelve hundred Catholics in a district where twenty years before there had scarcely been five. He was also deeply impressed with the beautiful farms and comfortable houses and the general air of industry, morality, and growing prosperity among the Irish immigrants who chiefly made up this Catholic settlement.¹⁷ The one thing that displeased him was the shabby little wooden church; and, at his urging, the good people of Whitefield in the next two years replaced it by a large and handsome brick church, which he dedicated on his next visit, August 12, 1838. Encouraging, too, were the growing missions served by Father Ryan at Hallowell, Gardiner, Bristol, Warren, Waldoboro, Thomaston, and elsewhere.

Even the little Eastport congregation increased during these years to about three hundred.¹⁸ For three years it maintained a resident priest: first, the Rev. Simon Walsh (July, 1834, to March, 1835), and next, the Rev. Francis Kiernan (June, 1835, to June, 1837); but then the depression came and the Eastport people had to fall back upon occasional visits from the pastor of Portland. It is interesting to note the appearance in the later thirties of little groups of Catholics in many of the neighboring towns, which were presumably attended at times from Eastport. Such groups are reported at Calais, Milltown, Baring, Dennysville, Pembroke, Trescott, Lubec, Machias, and Ellsworth.¹⁹

Of greater importance were the three new churches established during this period at Augusta, Bangor, and Benedicta.

Augusta, which became effectively the State capital in 1831, had entered upon what seemed a brilliant era of growth, with the erection of numerous public buildings, the construction of

¹⁷ *Memoranda*, July 14-15, 1832; his letter of Sept. 26, 1832, in *Annales de l'Association de la Propagation de la Foi*, VI (1833), 263 f.; *United States Catholic Intelligencer*, July 27, 1832.

¹⁸ Rev. Michael Lynch to Bishop Fenwick, Jan. 4, 1839 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

¹⁹ Father Ffrench to Bishop Fenwick, May 8, 1838 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*); Father Lynch to Bishop Fenwick, Jan. 4, 1839.

the great Kennebec Dam, and the launching of industrial enterprises which, it was hoped, would make the place "a second Lowell." Of the host of workingmen drawn to the spot by these undertakings, ninety per cent are said to have been Irish Catholics.²⁰ Father Ryan, of Whitefield, who had long attended Augusta as a mission, concluded that the time had come to provide a church. With the Bishop's sanction, in May, 1836, he purchased for two thousand dollars from the Unitarian Society, which was removing to the more fashionable west side, their "Bethlehem Church," which had originally cost five thousand dollars.²¹ Great as was Bishop Fenwick's joy over the forging of this new link in the chain of Catholic churches he was striving to spread across Maine, the sequel was disappointing. The Rev. John J. Curtin, who had acquired a great reputation and following as a preacher at the Cathedral in Boston, seems to have felt himself unhappy when sent down as first pastor of Augusta, and, rather than stay there, he resigned after three months and left the Diocese (August, 1836). His successor, Father Flood, had not been long installed when the business crash of 1837 wrought havoc with his poor congregation. It was clear that Augusta could not then support a resident pastor, and (May, 1838) it became once more for some years a mission of Whitefield.

Bangor likewise went through an exciting history during this period. Under the spell of the fantastic speculation in timber and other land, which began in 1832, it seemed as if a great metropolis was arising on the Penobscot with the speed of a Western boom-town. Bangor became one of "the Eastern wonders of the world." It had turned itself, as a caustic Portland newspaper remarked, from "a little, dirty, insignificant village" into a city which ranked itself with Boston and New York and looked down on Portland.²² Already in 1832 Bishop Fenwick was writing that Bangor was destined to be one of the first cities

²⁰ James D. Fisher to Martin Carroll, April 18, 1838 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

²¹ *Memoranda*, May 14, 1836; Bishop Fenwick to Rev. George Fenwick, S.J., April 27, 1836 (*Fordham Arch.*, 211 K 11).

²² *History of Penobscot County* (Cleveland, 1882), pp. 671-679.

of America, and that there was no other place in his Diocese in which he so much desired to found a church.²³

Father James Conway, who since 1831 had been pastor of the Indians at Oldtown twelve miles away, took the matter in hand. It was he who, according to the local tradition, said the first Mass in Bangor, presumably towards the end of 1831, in the house of James Carr on Court Street.²⁴ In the spring of 1833 he bought a lot for a church, while services continued to be held in private houses. The next year Father Patrick McNamee was sent to become first resident pastor and to begin building. While matters went far from smoothly under him, his more capable successor, Father Michael Lynch (appointed in April, 1836), carried the project through in spite of the collapse of the Bangor boom and the hard times that had set in. St. Michael's Church was substantially finished by 1838, and was dedicated by the Bishop November 10, 1839. With about a thousand people, the new congregation was already the largest in Maine save for Whitefield. Some missions had also been started in the neighborhood, notably at Belfast, which at least from 1832 onward was periodically attended by priests from Oldtown, Bangor, or Whitefield.²⁵

The third new church arose in consequence of the Bishop's desire to found a new Catholic settlement in Maine. Like many other observers (Bishop England, for instance), Dr. Fenwick was keenly concerned over the plight of the Irish immigrants to this country, most of whom became fixed in the cities, living too often in congested and unwholesome quarters, dependent upon ill-paid and precarious employment, and exposed to the vices and seductions of the streets. Those who

²³ Letter of Sept. 26, 1832 (*Annales de l'Association de la Propagation de la Foi*, VI, 1833, 260).

²⁴ *The Story of St. John's [Bangor], 1856-1906* (Ms. in the library of the Bangor Historical Society); *The Catholic Church in New England*, I, 512. But the date assigned by this tradition for the first Mass — December, 1828 — is impossible on the hypothesis that Father Conway was the celebrant; for he did not come into this vicinity, and was not even ordained, until 1831.

²⁵ The earliest definite information is in Bishop Fenwick's letter of Sept. 26, 1832 (*loc. cit.*), in which he stated that there were 150 Catholics in Belfast, who were visited about once a year by the pastor of Oldtown.

settled in the country districts, on the other hand, were likely to be surrounded by Protestants and to lose their religion, or, at any rate, to find themselves so remote from a church that they would be perpetually deprived of Mass and the Sacraments. One obvious solution of this problem was to induce immigrants to settle in the rural regions in compact groups, in colonies large enough to support a church and priest and to repel any dangers arising from a non-Catholic environment. More than one attempt had already been made to establish such colonies elsewhere, the most successful of which had been that of Father Demetrius A. Gallitzin in Cambria County, Pennsylvania.²⁶ For Bishop Fenwick the immediate stimulus to risk a similar attempt was probably supplied by the very favorable impression made upon him at his visit in 1832 by the Catholic community at North Whitefield. And the quarter to which his thoughts would naturally turn was northeastern Maine, whose rich, virgin lands were just being opened up and towards which — it was the peak of the famous Maine Land Speculation — there was then something of a stampede of buyers and settlers.

In 1833, therefore, the Bishop made the first public announcements of his plan to found an Irish Catholic colony. He intended, he declared, to buy some thousands of acres of first-class farm land in Maine, which he would then sell at cost price to settlers; he promised to provide a church and priest as soon as the colony was started; and he invited all persons interested to send in their names and a pledge as to the amount of land they were willing to buy, the actual payment to be made later in easy installments.²⁷ The response was highly gratifying. Pledges flowed in from Irishmen scattered throughout New England, from the British Provinces, and from as far south as Alabama.

²⁶ Cf. the interesting study by Sister Mary Gilbert Kelly, O.P., *Catholic Immigration Projects in the United States, 1815-1860* (U.S. Cath. Hist. Soc., Monograph Series, XVII [New York, 1939]).

²⁷ These announcements were made in the Bishop's newspaper, *The Jesuit*, April 27, July 13, Sept. 21, Oct. 5, 1833, with an advertisement running for many weeks in October and November.

It proved, however, no easy task to find a desirable location. In the late summer the Bishop, accompanied by Fathers Ffrench and Conway — once a land surveyor in Ireland — and by three Indians, made a canoe trip up the Penobscot and the Mattawamkeag to inspect a tract offered him. That trip was packed with adventures and privations, with some hairbreadth escapes from disaster, but the land was not very good and the price was too high. For many months other localities were considered. Finally attention centered upon Township No. 2, Range 5, in the southernmost part of Aroostook County. Father Conway, who apparently discovered it and who explored it late in 1833, recommended it strongly.²⁸ The Land Agent of Massachusetts, which owned it, at last came down to the low rate of \$1.25 per acre. After a second, hurried trip to the Maine woods, this time by wagon, the Bishop returned to Boston highly satisfied, and on July 7, 1834, concluded the purchase.²⁹ For \$13,597.50, to be paid in installments spread over six years, he acquired the richer, western half of Township No. 2, with 11,358 acres of, in the main, excellent farm land.

Efforts were made to start the colony immediately. Already in August it was announced that all the land bought by the Bishop had been subscribed for by prospective settlers, and that 134 families, comprising a total of 536 individuals, had moved or intended to move to "the Township."³⁰ Tradition has it that the first settlers did arrive late that summer at what quickly came to be called, in the Bishop's honor, "Benedicta." The poorer ones are said to have come on foot, some even barefoot, all the way from Boston. The less poor traveled to Bangor by boat, and then with hired teams or on foot made their way over the rough wilderness roads to the spot still covered with virgin forest where they were to make their new homes.³¹

²⁸ Father Conway to Bishop Fenwick, Nov. 13, 1833 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

²⁹ *Eastern Land Deeds*, VI, 293, in *Mass. State Arch.*

³⁰ *The Jesuit*, Aug. 9, 1834.

³¹ Rev. John E. Kealy, "A Memorable Day in Benedicta," *Maine Cath. Hist. Magazine*, VIII, no. 3-6 (1928), 192 f.; Sister Mary Gilbert Kelly, *op. cit.*, p. 12; *Boston Sunday Globe*, Nov. 10, 1929.

As has so often happened with new settlements in this country, the first years of Benedicta were a rather trying period. The Bishop, busy with many things, was long unable to give the colony the attention and the leadership it required. Most of those who had engaged to take up land in it delayed moving there, waiting to see how the first comers would fare. Some of the latter quickly became discouraged and left. The promised church was not completed until 1838. Both because of the paucity of settlers and his own lack of priests, Bishop Fenwick long failed to provide a resident pastor, the people being served only by occasional visits of priests sent up from Oldtown or Boston. When the Bishop was at last free to visit his colony for the first time in 1837, he found only seventy-five persons there men, women, and children.

But that visit was the turning-point. Bishop Fenwick's vigorous impulsion so revived the hopes and prospects of the community that the population doubled within the next year, and henceforth grew in slow but steady fashion. And the Bishop himself came, saw, and was conquered. He had fallen in love with the place: with the fertility of the soil, the magnificent crops, the beauty of the scenery, the bracing climate, the homely, rustic virtues of the people. By 1838 his head was filled with plans for new enterprises at Benedicta. Father Tyler was sent up there for the whole season to start the construction of a dam, a sawmill, a gristmill, and an orphan asylum, which was to be connected with a farm school.³² By the time Bishop Fenwick himself went up for his now annual visit, he was also planning to erect a college and seminary there.³³ It would be a long time, he wrote to his brother, before they would again see him in Georgetown. "The Moluncus is now the order of the day. Whatever time I can spare out of Boston, it is there I shall spend it."³⁴ "The far-famed Township" had become and was to remain for some years his great enthusiasm: his

³² *Memoranda*, May 8, 1838; Bishop Fenwick to Rev. George Fenwick, S.J., May 11, 1838 (*Fordham Arch.*, 212 P 7).

³³ Letters to Rev. George Fenwick, S.J., Sept. 1, Nov. 29, Dec. 4, 1838 (*Fordham Arch.*, 212 N 2, M 7, 9); *Memoranda*, Dec. 31, 1838.

³⁴ Dec. 4, 1838.

"land of promise," the "land flowing with milk and honey," his "garden of delights."³⁵

V

The Indian problem had remained unsolved at the end of 1830. There was no missionary with either tribe. It was difficult to see how one could be supported without a subsidy from somewhere, for the Indians were far too poor to be able to offer much in the way of voluntary contributions. Because of the maneuvers of Sock Bason and the Rev. Elijah Kellogg, relations with the Passamaquoddies were seriously strained.

In 1831 the Bishop set patiently to work to restore the situation. Mindful of the success of the old French missionaries with these tribes and of the surviving predilection of the Indians for the French, he launched an appeal through the organ of the *Association de la Propagation de la Foi* for French priests to come over and serve his poor Abenakis.³⁶ This appeal attracted the attention of the Abbé Pierre-Joseph Coudrin, the venerable founder of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, commonly known as the Picpus Fathers, a congregation which was just beginning that glorious work in the foreign missions of which the story of Father Damien among the Hawaiian lepers is probably the best known chapter. Father Coudrin straightway offered two of his priests, doubtless expecting that one would serve each tribe.

Bishop Fenwick, while gladly accepting, had meantime somewhat altered his plans. Not wishing to leave the faithful Penobscots any longer unshepherded, he had sent them³⁷ the newly ordained Father James Conway. This excellent young priest so quickly won their confidence and affection that it seemed best to make his station permanent. The Bishop, therefore, decided — and so wrote to Paris — that on their arrival one of the

³⁵ Phrases taken from his letters of 1839-1840 to his brother and to Archbishop Eccleston.

³⁶ Letter of Sept. 6, 1831, printed in the *Annales* of the Association, V (1832), 447-482.

³⁷ Sept. 24, 1831 (*Memoranda*).

French priests should take on the delicate Passamaquoddy mission, and the other should be sent to the Canadians of Burlington.³⁸ For the support of the missionaries to the Indians, he had just achieved a great success at Washington: with the powerful aid of the Hon. Edward Kavanagh, now Congressman from Maine, he obtained, in January, 1833, the promise of an annual grant of two hundred dollars from the "Civilization Fund" of the War Department for the instruction of the Passamaquoddies, and some time later in the year a grant of one hundred dollars for the benefit of the Penobscots.³⁹ He was stepping into Kellogg's inheritance — to the boundless chagrin of that reverend gentleman, who for several years thereafter, with the aid of the ever loyal Sock Bason, made desperate but fruitless efforts at Washington to have the school at Pleasant Point closed and the schoolhouse sold, rather than allow the Catholics to enjoy them.

In the late summer of 1833 the two Picpus Fathers arrived. They were the Rev. Louis-Edmond Demillier and the Rev. Auguste Petithomme. The former became pastor and schoolmaster of the Passamaquoddies: the latter, after spending the winter with his colleague, was dispatched to his Vermont mission.

It quickly became apparent that in Father Demillier the spirit and the best traditions of the French missionaries of colonial days were revived. He applied himself at once to learn the difficult Abenaki language, and so successfully that within a year or two he could preach in it as readily as in his mother tongue. He composed in it a catechism and a prayer-book. The school at Pleasant Point was at last taught and attended with diligence and success. Through his efforts, combined with those of Bishop Fenwick and the Indians themselves, the Maine Legislature in 1835 granted funds for a much-

³⁸ Letter of Feb. 3, 1833 (*Annales de l'Association de la Propagation de la Foi*, VI, 1833, 276).

³⁹ The history of these negotiations can be fairly closely traced from the mass of correspondence of this year between Bishop Fenwick, Kavanagh, Secretary Cass, and Herring, Chief of the Indian Office, preserved in the National Archives at Washington.

needed new church. He interested himself keenly in all that concerned his protégés; he suffered and chafed at the neglect or the wrongs which they still had to endure; and far from being a charge upon them, he gave them whatever little money came into his hands. "I am as poor as they are, and even poorer," he wrote to the Bishop: "I haven't a dollar to pay my debts."⁴⁰ In spite of the poverty, the isolation, the monotony, the manifold discomforts of his situation, he loved his task and his Abenakis; and it goes almost without saying that he gained their love, trust, and obedience in return. With them and for them he was to spend the rest of his life.

The Oldtown mission experienced more varied fortunes. Father Conway, to the great grief of the Indians, was recalled in October, 1835, to make way for Father Petithomme, since the Abbé Coudrin seems to have protested against having his two priests widely separated. After only a year among the Penobscots, however, the good Picpus father — as to whose career in America there is almost a complete dearth of information — removed to Nova Scotia, to take over the mission of Cape Sable, whence in 1839 he was transferred by his superiors to Valparaiso, Chile, and disappears completely from our view. The Rev. Patrick Rattigan succeeded him at Oldtown, but remained scarcely six months (December, 1836, to June, 1837).

It may be surmised that the difficulty obstructing the Penobscot mission was the problem of obtaining the barest living for a priest when there were no assured resources except the one hundred dollars a year granted by the United States Government for maintaining the school. This difficulty was quite unnecessary, inasmuch as since 1833 there had existed the "Penobscot Fund," a sum of over fifty thousand dollars, accruing from the sale of the last northern townships belonging to the tribe, the interest on which sum was supposed to be expended by the Governor and Council of Maine for the benefit of the Indians. The real problem was to persuade the Maine authorities that this fund — the Indians' own money — could properly be spent for the purpose that the Indians had most at

⁴⁰ Letter of March 11, 1835 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

heart: to maintain a religious teacher of the kind they wanted. By the joint efforts of the Bishop and the Penobscots and an outburst of unwonted liberality on the part of the Council, at the beginning of 1838 this difficulty was overcome: two hundred and fifty dollars a year was granted from the Penobscot Fund to support a priest.⁴¹

The Indians, who had remained a year without a "patriarch," could now be gratified by the arrival of a very talented young priest, just ordained, the Rev. Edward Murphy. He revived the mission and the school with a vigor that delighted the Penobscots and must almost have terrified the State officials — was he not soon demanding books, newspapers, maps, and globes for his savages, and even the translation of an English dictionary into Abenaki! ⁴² At any rate, with able and zealous missionaries established in both tribes, with the Kellogg intrigue finally vanquished, and with financial help secured from both the State and Federal Governments, Bishop Fenwick may well have felt, at the close of 1838, that the Indian problem was on the way to being solved.

VI

In southeastern Massachusetts and in the region just west of Boston the few existing churches and the increasing number of mission stations were, throughout this period, grouped together in frequently shifting combinations, and served by clergymen changing even more frequently. Almost every town here had some industries, and therefore some Catholics, but seldom did the number of the faithful rise above fifty — sixty — seventy-five. It was in these tiny congregations, fairly close to headquarters, that the Bishop preferred to give his newly ordained priests their practical initiation into the work of the ministry.

How wide was the area served by the Waltham church is

⁴¹ *Memoranda*, Sept. 27, 1837, Feb. 17, 1838; *Council Documents*, 1837-1838, nos. 12, 79, and *Council Register*, Feb. 14, 1838 (*Maine State Archives*).

⁴² Father Murphy's undated report on his school to the Governor and Council (*Council Documents*, 1839, no. 354).

suggested by a newspaper announcement of 1831 about services there, which was addressed to "the Catholics of Waltham, Watertown, Newton, Sudbury, and Concord."⁴³ Nevertheless, the congregation remained so small that Waltham was for a while treated as a mission of Salem (1831-1833), and then of South Boston (1833-1836). For a couple of years it then had resident pastors: Father James Smyth, who also looked after Canton and Randolph, and Father Francis Kiernan, who had charge not only of these three places, but also of Sandwich, Wareham, and New Bedford. After the latter's withdrawal from the Diocese, Waltham again became a mission of South Boston (1838).

The chief nuclei of Catholic growth in the region just south of Boston were: Quincy, with its quarries and its shoemaking; Randolph, another shoe town; and Canton, the seat of the Revere Copper Company and other varied industries.

As to Catholic beginnings in Quincy, then a village of scarcely two thousand inhabitants, the following curious story has come down to us:

The first Mass celebrated in Quincy was in what was called the "Long House," which then stood near the brook on Adams Street. An old settler related the circumstances to us as follows: Late in the year 1826 a gentleman called to see President [John Quincy] Adams, who was then at home. He introduced himself as a Roman Catholic clergyman, and gave his name as Rev. Father Pendergast. He told the President that he came to visit the Catholics of this vicinity and administer the Sacraments to them, and being a stranger he made bold to ask Mr. Adams for information as to how he could find the Catholics. The President received him very kindly, and after some conversation called in Mr. John Kirk [an Irishman in his employment], who at that time lived with the President, and introduced Father Pendergast. The news soon spread through the village that "the Priest had come." Confessions were heard that night, and early next morning the first Mass was celebrated.⁴⁴

⁴³ *The Jesuit*, July 30.

⁴⁴ *Quincy Monitor*, May, 1886 (a Catholic monthly). This story has been commonly accepted by later writers, including Charles Francis Adams in his *History of Braintree . . . and Quincy* (Cambridge, 1891), pp. 297 f.

This tradition, although unconfirmed by any other evidence, seems not at all improbable. The otherwise unknown Father Pendergast may well have been some outside priest passing through Boston, who obtained the Bishop's permission to visit the Quincy quarry-workers in order to take up a collection for some religious purpose. Two years later Father Ffrench, while raising funds for his three churches, said Mass at West Quincy,⁴⁵ at the house of a generous Universalist, Thomas Crane (in whose honor the present Public Library of the city is named). Father Woodley came once in 1830;⁴⁶ Father Connolly, of Sandwich, came frequently down to 1833; and thereafter priests, generally those from South Boston, held services at Quincy at least occasionally, at the Long House or in private houses.

When and by whom the first Mass in Canton was said remains an obscure question. Already at the close of 1828 the Bishop had hopes of establishing a church "at Milton or Canton," to serve the Blue Hills region.⁴⁷ Father Tyler came on a mission to Canton in 1829,⁴⁸ and the next year Father Connolly began to make very frequent visits, which he kept up even after he was transferred to Providence (1832-1834), and which were continued by his successor there, Father Lee. From the numerous references to the subject in the Catholic newspapers and in Bishop Fenwick's journal, it would appear that Mass was then being said at Canton once a month or oftener, sometimes at the "Stone Factory Chapel," sometimes in the Episcopal Church, loaned to the Catholics "every alternate Sunday." The two leading officers of the Copper Company, Joseph Warren Revere (the son of Paul Revere) and Colonel Frederic W. Lincoln (the nephew and adopted son of Paul Revere), distinguished themselves by their friendliness to Catholic priests and to "the friendless Irish."⁴⁹ The Bishop visited

⁴⁵ William S. Pattee, *A History of Old Braintree and Quincy, with a Sketch of Randolph and Holbrook* (Quincy, 1878), p. 276.

⁴⁶ His baptismal register shows him at Quincy on Sept. 26, 1830, a Sunday, so that he may be presumed to have said Mass there.

⁴⁷ *Memoranda*, Dec. 31, 1828.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, Aug. 22, 1829.

⁴⁹ *Catholic Sentinel*, Feb. 7, 1835.

the town in 1833 to see whether the time had come for establishing a church, but decided in the negative.⁵⁰ Four years later, however, his opinion had altered. By this time one hundred Catholics were reported at Canton, who were eager to have a church, while at Randolph about seventy more, first heard of in 1836, were begging for the same privilege.⁵¹ Accordingly, early in 1837, Father James Smyth was appointed to serve these two towns (as also Waltham and, probably, Quincy), with instructions to build a church in each.⁵² Unfortunately, this promising development was cut short a few months later when, as part of a large shift in clerical assignments then taking place, the energetic Father Smyth was transferred to New Haven (August, 1837). Under his far from energetic successor, Father Kiernan, and partly, perhaps, as a result of the business depression, the plans for churches in Canton and Randolph dropped out of sight, to remain in abeyance for many years to come.

The small churches at Sandwich and New Bedford and the mission of Wareham were served during this period by the Rev. Peter Connolly (1830-1832), Rev. Patrick Canavan (1832-1834), Rev. Francis Kiernan (1834-1835), Rev. John Brady (1835-1837), Father Kiernan again (1837), and Rev. Constantine Lee (1837-1839). The congregations grew scarcely at all. Sandwich, after 1834, suffered from a depression of the glass industry which lasted for a decade, while in the other two towns the Catholics were chiefly unmarried workingmen who were "here today and gone tomorrow." Father Connolly conducted a roving apostolate which carried him all over the Cape and, apart from the towns already mentioned, as far as the factories of Easton, Foxboro, and Walpole.⁵³ Father Canavan, in October, 1833, said the first Mass on the island of Nantucket, which henceforth was attended more or less regularly by the pastors of New Bedford.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ *Memoranda*, May 10.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, Jan. 30, 1837; April 29, 1836; *Pilot*, May 14, June 18, Oct. 29, 1836.

⁵² *Memoranda*, Jan. 30, Feb. 28, May 20, 1837.

⁵³ *The Jesuit*, July 16, 1831. Cf. Rev. Raymond B. Bourgoïn, *The Catholic Church in Sandwich, 1830-1930* (Boston, n.d.), pp. 14 f.

⁵⁴ Rev. H. E. S. Hennis, *Note on the Mission of Nantucket* (1857), in *Boston Dioc. Arch.*

If the gains made during these years in most parts of southeastern Massachusetts were rather slim, marked progress was achieved in the towns which had been the centres of Father Woodley's old mission. Providence, Pawtucket, Newport, Taunton, and Fall River, at the close of 1830, had all just been placed under the care of the youthful and energetic Father John Corry, an excellent leader and organizer. His first undertaking was a church at Taunton. On land purchased June 24, 1831, the work was pushed through so rapidly that on October 28th of the following year the Bishop could dedicate the neat, wooden, Gothic Church of St. Mary's. "The Catholics of Taunton deserve great praise," he noted in his journal. "They are not over 150 in number as yet, and notwithstanding have erected a Church, poor as they are, which has cost over two thousand Dollars."⁵⁵

Father Corry's next plan was a church in Providence. For this purpose he succeeded in buying, for \$1,584, a splendid site on rising ground in the western part of the city — a lot which today underlies the central aisle and sanctuary of the Cathedral. As so often happened in those days, this acquisition had to be made through a "dummy" purchaser — in this case Francis Hy, one of the two naturalized Irishmen in Providence; and it is said that the original seller, on learning that his land was to be used for a Catholic church, vainly offered first one hundred dollars, then five hundred dollars, to have the deed torn up.⁵⁶ Not long afterwards, however, the Bishop decided to divide this excessively large "parish" (November, 1832). Father Corry was to retain Taunton, where he had hitherto resided, Newport, and Fall River, while Father Connolly was to attend Providence, Pawtucket, and Canton.

Within his reduced jurisdiction, the indefatigable Father Corry at once set out to build an adequate church at Newport to replace Father Woodley's remodeled schoolhouse. The en-

⁵⁵ *Memoranda*, Oct. 29, 1832.

⁵⁶ Rev. Thomas F. Cullen, *The Catholic Church in Rhode Island* (North Providence, 1936), p. 78; Isaac Matthewson to Francis Hy, Jan. 17, 1832; Francis Hy to Bishop Fenwick, March 13, 1832 (*Providence Land Deeds*, book 61, pp. 234 and 258).

terprise required four years' effort, but on August 20, 1837, St. Joseph's Church was dedicated. In the briskly growing town of Fall River a lot on the site of the present St. Mary's Cathedral was purchased in 1835; and here, too, by 1837 Father Corry had finished a church which, as Bishop Fenwick declared, 'reflected honor on pastor and people.'⁵⁷ The Bishop estimated that Fall River now had about four hundred Catholics, while at Newport there were about two hundred in the town and five hundred more employed on the works at Fort Adams.⁵⁸

Meanwhile, at Providence matters had not gone so smoothly. The difficulty there was no longer lack of people, for with the building of the railroads and the growth of industry the Catholic population had leaped from around two hundred in 1832 to over fifteen hundred by 1838.⁵⁹ No other city in the Diocese save Boston witnessed such a rapid increase at that time. The trouble lay rather in the factious and turbulent spirit which long seemed to animate part of the congregation of Providence, and then in the lack of strong clerical leadership.

The great problem of those years was to provide a church, and one worthy of the capital of Rhode Island. Towards that Father Connolly's brief pastorate (November, 1832, to April, 1834) accomplished nothing more than to pay off the debt on the lot which Father Corry had bought. His successor was the Rev. Constantine Lee, who had come into the Diocese in 1833 with high recommendations from the Vicar Apostolic of Edinburgh. Educated at Rome and a Doctor of Theology — and in both these respects a *rara avis* among Bishop Fenwick's priests — he was blessed with learning, talents, eloquence, and piety; but the ability to raise money, to pay his debts promptly, and to handle unruly people seems to have been denied him. He

⁵⁷ *Memoranda*, Aug. 21, 1837. The lot was bought on Feb. 18, 1835, for \$659.67 (Peter McLarin to John Corry, *Bristol County Land Deeds*, book 145, p. 223).

⁵⁸ Letter of Aug. 29, 1837, to the *Association de la Propagation de la Foi* (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁵⁹ Rev. John Corry to Judge Staples, Jan. 10, 1843 (*Rhode Island Hist. Soc., R.I. Mss.*, X, 120); *Memoranda*, Nov. 4, 1838.

did, indeed, after long delays, lay the cornerstone of the new church in September, 1836, and begin building operations. But there followed a tragic period of continual financial crises, recurring threats that not only the building but the church lot would be attached by the unpaid mason and carpenter, frequent appeals to the Bishop's purse to save the situation, and more and more vehement opposition from within the congregation. Dr. Fenwick's patience at last gave way. At the end of May, 1837, he replaced Father Lee by the Rev. Michael Mills, a priest just arrived from Dublin, from whom he 'hoped the best success.'⁶⁰ Instead, Father Mills turned out to be even more unsatisfactory than Father Lee, and was dismissed within three months.

The harassed Bishop then resolved upon sweeping changes. The veteran Father Corry was recalled to take charge of Providence (August, 1837). Father Wiley was sent to Taunton and Fall River. Father Lee was entrusted with Pawtucket and Newport, to which were later added New Bedford, Wareham, and Sandwich.

This arrangement, in the main, worked out excellently. In the face of the most discouraging circumstances — for the hard times of 1837 were particularly severe in Rhode Island — Father Corry resumed the building of the church and drove it through with stern determination. On November 4, 1838, the Bishop at long last dedicated the Church of SS. Peter and Paul. At the head of its baptismal register Father Corry wrote: "It is not to be found in History that ever was there a Catholic Church built with so much opposition on the part of the Catholics as this." At any rate, this castellated Gothic structure, built of slate-stone covered with cement, which measured eighty feet by forty, and which had cost nearly twelve thousand dollars, might rank at that time as one of the largest, handsomest, and most expensive Catholic churches in New England. Whatever toils and anguish it had cost, its erection was no small credit to

⁶⁰ *Memoranda*, May 18. Father Lee's failure cannot be ascribed to old age, as has commonly been said by writers on the Catholic history of Rhode Island. He was only thirty-seven when he was appointed to Providence.

a congregation of only fifteen hundred persons, a congregation made up almost exclusively of very recent immigrants and largely composed of poor "railroaders" and underpaid factory hands.

At Taunton Father Wiley found a flock which within a few years had increased from one hundred and fifty to five hundred.⁶¹ The church, which at first was considered far too big, had quickly proved too small, and had to be enlarged. This growth was, indeed, checked by the business depression then setting in, but in all other respects the parish flourished greatly under Father Wiley. The Taunton congregation passed for one of the most zealous, united, and edifying congregations of the Diocese.

Father Lee, on the other hand, even with four or five missions assigned to him,⁶² found it impossible to support himself. Leaving the Diocese early in 1839, he betook himself first to Illinois and then to Canada. It is pleasant to note that in his last pastorate, at St. Catherine, in the Province of Ontario, he did excellent work; and his death, in 1842, was from pneumonia contracted while going one night in a drenching storm to give the Last Sacraments to a dying laborer on the canal.⁶³

VII

Perhaps the climax of the missionary achievements of this period was the work done in Connecticut and in central and western Massachusetts. This story centres around the revered figure of Father Fitton, in whose long life of service these were probably the most fruitful and heroic years. It may make for clearness to outline at the start the successive expansions and contractions of his sphere of operations.

As pastor of Hartford (1831-1836), he was at first charged with all the missions in the State of Connecticut. To this he added most of western Massachusetts in 1832, and central

⁶¹ *Memoranda*, Oct. 29, 1832, and July 17, 1836.

⁶² Pawtucket was transferred to Father Corry about the end of 1837.

⁶³ Dean W. R. Harris, *The Catholic Church in the Niagara Peninsula, 1626-1895* (Toronto, 1895), pp. 253-257.

Massachusetts in 1833. This latter year marked the maximum extension of his responsibilities. To this moment, in particular, his oft-quoted jest applied, that 'his parish extended from Boston to New York.'⁶⁴ But in this same year, after the establishment of Father McDermott at New Haven, Father Fitton surrendered to him the missions of southwestern Connecticut. In 1836 he gave up Hartford, transferring his residence to Worcester; and by a delimitation made by the Bishop the following year it was fixed that the new Hartford pastor should have charge of northwestern Connecticut (Hartford, Litchfield, and Middlesex Counties) and of Berkshire and Hampden Counties in Massachusetts, while Father Fitton would care for Worcester, Hampshire, and Franklin Counties in the latter State, and for eastern Connecticut (Tolland, Windham, and New London Counties).⁶⁵

While attentive to his duties towards the established congregations over which he might be placed, this born missionary was, above all things, interested in pioneering. He delighted in touring the waste places, in penetrating the towns and villages where priest and Mass had never been seen, in discovering and ministering to every little group of Catholics and every isolated child of the Faith that could be found, in laying foundations far and wide for the future growth of the Church. While his *Sketches of the Establishment of the Church in New England* afford many a picturesque reminiscence of his experiences and adventures as a missionary, the following extract from one of his letters to the Bishop gives a contemporary illustration of his activities:

I am seldom in Hartford two weeks together, but hovering around the country, preaching in public and private, [in] Town and school houses, barns & garrets, &c, &c., occasionally bringing adults to the font of baptism and reclaiming our own children, who have lived for years in distant places, some married to wives unbaptized, and as many yet in single life in danger of falling into the same deplorable indifference. . . . I have just returned from a tour of fifty miles up the Connecticut

⁶⁴ Father Fitton, *Sketches*, p. 206.

⁶⁵ *Memoranda*, Nov. 28, 1837.

River, and truly it was a pleasing sight to see at different stations the scattered flocks assembled to attend their religious duties. The most distant point which time would allow me to attend, that I might return to Hartford by Sunday, was Factory Village [in Greenfield], a small town near Northampton. I there found about twenty assembled from different points of the country, nearly all of whom approached the tribunal of reconciliation, & the remaining promising to prepare for my next visit, which, God willing, will be in about two months, after completing my eastern circuit, when I intend to go still farther north, I am told there are others who have not seen a Clergyman since arriving in this country. There is scarce a mill-site — and there are many — over the circuit of my mission, where there are not from two and three to ten and twelve Catholics, all of whom may be visited to advantage three or four times during the year. There is unquestionably abundant labor for one Clergyman to attend these missions independently of Hartford. . . .⁶⁶

The coming of the railroads facilitated, redoubled, and largely directed his labors. During the construction of the lines between Boston and Worcester (1834-1835), Worcester and Springfield (1837-1839), Worcester and Norwich (1836-1840), he was assiduous in following up and ministering to the armies of Irish "railroaders," saying Mass for them periodically in shanties or in the open air, and rushing many a time to attend the dying victims of blasting, "cave-ins," and other accidents. All in all, the number of places he is known to have visited, of towns in which he is credited with saying the first Mass, of mission stations that he established, is almost prodigious.

Father Fitton had taken sole charge of the Hartford church in October, 1831, when its first pastor, the Rev. Bernard O'Cavanagh, dissatisfied for some reason, resigned and left the Diocese. The new pastor's situation there during the next five years must have been in various ways far from pleasant. In spite of his marked success in making converts, the congregation grew but slowly. It numbered only about two hundred in 1836.⁶⁷ Very little progress could be made with reducing

⁶⁶ Father Fitton to Bishop Fenwick, Jan. 26, 1836 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁶⁷ *Pilot*, Feb. 19, 1842.

the heavy debt hanging over the parish. From the damp and often water-soaked basement under the church, where he had his lodgings, Father Fitton contracted the rheumatism which tortured him for the rest of his life and which led him to pronounce church basements "the smallest economy ever projected, especially for sleeping apartments."⁶⁸ What with the care of Hartford and all his far-flung missions and, for a while, the editing of the *Catholic Press*, his energies must have been taxed to the utmost. Often he pleaded for assistants, but those sent to him gave him little relief. The excellent Father McDermott, who came in September, 1832, at once began to centre his labors at New Haven, where by the following spring he had taken up permanent residence and become independent pastor. The Rev. Edward McCool and the Rev. Francis Kieran, who came successively in 1834, did not remain more than a few months each. At last, in April, 1836, Father Fitton, whose interest had more and more turned towards the new missions he was opening up in Massachusetts, obtained permission to transfer his headquarters to Worcester.

He was succeeded at Hartford by the Rev. Peter Walsh, an old friend and associate of the Bishop in Maryland, who suffered from such ill health that he remained but a year. Father John Brady, formerly of Claremont and Sandwich, replaced him in August, 1837. By this time, owing especially to railroad-building, the congregation was at last beginning to increase rapidly. By the end of 1838 the debts to Nicholas Devereux and others, which had so long worried pastors and people, were finally extinguished. Under the vigorous administration of Father Brady, which was to last for seventeen years, the Hartford church entered upon an era of prosperity and steady growth.

New Haven, as has been seen, received its first resident pastor in the Rev. James T. McDermott, a young Irishman whom the Bishop had accepted as a student in 1831 and ordained the following year. Responding to the wishes of a zealous and generous little flock, of perhaps two hundred Catholics,⁶⁹

⁶⁸ *Sketches*, p. 194.

⁶⁹ Rev. James H. O'Donnell, in *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 328.

Father McDermott at once bought land for a church at the corner of York Street and Davenport Avenue, where the Church of St. John the Evangelist now stands, and began building. In less than a year the edifice, sixty feet by forty-five feet, in dimensions — which was about the normal size of first Catholic churches at that time — had been completed, and, what was more remarkable, almost paid for. It was, the Boston *Jesuit* declared, “without exception the most beautiful little Gothic church to be anywhere seen in New England.”⁷⁰ But in its construction, unhappily, one tragic mistake had been made. Over the entrance was a gallery, projecting fourteen feet from the end wall, which should, according to the original plan, have been supported by two columns. The carpenter, deeming this unnecessary, had undertaken to support it merely by trussing.

On May 8, 1834, Ascension Day, Bishop Fenwick was to dedicate “Christ’s Church.” A great concourse of people had assembled, including Catholics from all the adjacent country and numerous Protestants drawn by curiosity. The Bishop, accompanied by Fathers Fitton and McDermott, had just moved round the church in solemn procession and, returned to the altar, was about to intone the litanies

when the opposite gallery gave way, and with a loud crash was precipitated, with all its incumbents, upon the mass of people below. In an instant the whole assembled crowd was thrown into a state of the most horrible confusion, where nothing was heard but the screams of the affrighted and the groans of the wounded and dying. All self-possession was lost for some moments — everyone imagined that the entire edifice was tumbling upon him. A rush was made to the sacristy, which served only to increase the confusion still more; while numbers climbed up and escaped through the windows.⁷¹

Two persons were killed, a boy named Abraham Bryan and his grandfather, a Mr. Hardyear, both converts who had been brought into the Church by the converted minister, Rev. Calvin White, of Derby. Six other persons were “dreadfully wounded.”

⁷⁰ May 17, 1834.

⁷¹ *The Jesuit*, May 17, 1834.

The Bishop himself had escaped death only by a matter of seconds.⁷² After the church had been cleared and cleaned, after the funeral of the two victims, and after Bishop Fenwick had revived the spirits of the terrified and discouraged congregation, on May 11th the dedication at last took place.

Apart from this one catastrophe, the New Haven parish developed most peacefully and prosperously under Father McDermott and his successors, Father Wiley (June-August, 1837), and Father James Smyth (1837-1848). By the later thirties it had probably outstripped Hartford considerably in numbers, and might rank as one of the strongest parishes of the Diocese outside of Boston.

Among the smaller towns of the State Middletown and Chatham, which together had one hundred and fifty Catholics in 1836, and Bridgeport, with one hundred, offered the best promise for the future. At Bridgeport land was bought for a church in 1837. Other mission stations in Connecticut which were more or less regularly attended were Norwalk, Derby, Waterbury, Thompsonville, Tariffville, New London, Norwich, and Stonington.

In western Massachusetts the beginnings of Catholic activity are far from perfectly known,⁷³ and offer, in particular, a number of chronological problems. It would seem, however, that the date at which Father Fitton inaugurated his memorable work in this region was, not 1830, as has commonly been stated, but 1832.⁷⁴ Two events of this latter year probably served to

⁷² Bishop Fenwick to Rev. George Fenwick, S.J., May 22, 1834 (*Fordham Arch.*, 211 W 10).

⁷³ A particularly severe loss is that of the oldest baptismal register of Holy Trinity Church, Hartford — the "cradle church of the Connecticut Valley" — destroyed in the fire of 1853. The first marriage register of that church, which is still preserved at St. Patrick's, Hartford, offers a meagre substitute.

⁷⁴ Father Fitton did claim in his *Sketches* (pp. 312, 317) that as early as 1830 he was regularly visiting Springfield, Westfield, Chicopee, and other river towns. But that book, written thirty to forty years after most of the events described in it, and written by a very elderly man, contains, as every serious student knows, so many chronological inaccuracies that its dates cannot safely be accepted unless confirmed by other evidence. There is, as far as the present writer knows, no contemporary evidence to show that Father Fitton had begun his missions in western Massachusetts before 1832, but there is much evidence

draw him thither. One was the resumption of work on the canal between Westfield and Northampton. The other was the beginning of the industrial development of Cabotville.

The New Haven-Northampton Canal had been extended by 1829 as far north as the new "seaport" of Westfield, but work had then been suspended for lack of funds. This difficulty having been overcome, in the spring of 1832 operations were resumed, with nearly five hundred laborers at work between Westfield and Northampton.⁷⁵ As most of these hands were doubtless Irishmen, this meant that until the completion of the canal three years later there was a considerable body of Catholics to be attended at both towns or along the line between them. Father Fitton appears to have sprung into action at once. As early as May 17, 1832, the *Catholic Press* of Hartford informed the faithful at Westfield that they would be visited by "their pastor" the following week. Such visits were doubtless continued and pushed further.⁷⁶ On December 20, 1832, the same newspaper announced that Father McDermott, then assistant at Hartford, would attend Westfield on January 1st and Northampton on the 3rd. That Father Fitton had already visited the latter town, some time in 1832, is the more probable since the tradition is strong that it was he who said the first Mass there, in the house of John Foley at "Straw Hollow" (now the section called Leeds).⁷⁷ After the completion of the canal few Catholics remained at Westfield, though they were still attended from time to time by a priest; but at

to show that he was active there that year. His own account of his first visit to Chicopee can refer only to the Cabotville section of that community and to the situation there in 1832; before that there was no settlement at Cabotville. His account of his earliest visits to Westfield (p. 325) likewise indicates that he went to attend the laborers on the canal; but there were no such laborers there in 1830-1831, and he could not have come in 1828-1829, when there were some there, for he was then in a very different part of New England.

⁷⁵ *Northampton Courier*, April 25, June 6, Oct. 10, 1832. Cf. *An Account of the Farmington Canal Company; of the Hampshire and Hampden Canal Company; and of the New Haven and Northampton Company till the Suspension of Its Canals in 1847* (New Haven, 1850).

⁷⁶ The Hartford marriage register reports a marriage performed at Westfield, Mass., Oct. 29, 1832, by Father McDermott.

⁷⁷ Louis H. Everts, *History of the Connecticut Valley in Massachusetts* (Philadelphia, 1879), I, 214. Cf. Father Fitton, *Sketches*, p. 324.

Northampton the Catholic colony maintained itself and grew slowly, thanks to the factories in the western part of the town.

In the present city of Chicopee, which down to 1848 formed part of Springfield, cotton mills had begun to arise at the Falls from 1823 onward. The larger development farther down the river, at what came to be called "Cabotville," started in 1831-1832 with the formation of the Springfield Canal Company (corresponding to the Proprietors of Locks and Canals at Lowell) and the Cabot Manufacturing Company for textiles. The very deliberate design was to create "a new Lowell," and the amazing growth of the place in the next ten years was amply to reward the effort.

In the spring of 1832 the transformation of a wilderness began with the building of a dam across the Chicopee River and the construction of a canal to serve the future mills. Operations were directed by the agent of the Springfield Company, John Chase, who was for many years to be the foremost man — the Kirk Boott — of Cabotville, and who was always to show himself a warm friend to Catholics.⁷⁸ It was he who imported Irish laborers for the dam and canal-building that spring, and he continued to import them in large numbers for the mills that arose in rapid succession in the next few years.

Father Fitton must have paid his first visit to the spot very early in 1832, for, according to his later account, he came to attend the workers on the canal at a time when the dam was not yet constructed and there was scarcely a building in the place except the "boarding-house," which served him "for chapel and all other purposes."⁷⁹ According to one story, he was summoned here for the first time by John Chase "to attend an Irish laborer named Peplin, who, dying from injuries received in an accident on the works, lay piteously calling for the priest."⁸⁰ The first definite date that can be assigned to a

⁷⁸ His sister, Sebra Chase, became a convert and married a man named Michael Murray.

⁷⁹ *Sketches*, p. 317.

⁸⁰ Rev. John J. McCoy, in *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 596. A search of the Springfield newspapers of that time and of the death records at the Springfield City Hall has failed to produce any confirmation of this story.

priestly visit here comes from the *Catholic Press* of November 15, 1832, which announced that the Catholics of "Chickopee" would be visited by "their pastor" the following Sunday, the 18th.

Owing to the ample opportunities for employment and the inrush of Irish laborers, Cabotville became, as Father Fitton called it, "the rallying point" of his western missions. By the beginning of 1836, tired, as he said, "of performing service in chambers and kitchens," he had bought a lot here, intending to build a chapel.⁸¹ This plan was not realized, probably because shortly after he surrendered this mission to his successors at Hartford. But in 1838 Father Brady organized the Cabotville flock as a congregation, and it was increasingly evident that a church would soon have to be built.

In Springfield proper (as distinguished from its northern portion, now Chicopee) Catholic beginnings are veiled in obscurity. Father Fitton has recorded that when he first came there, he found but three Catholic families and a few unmarried men.⁸² This visit and the celebration of the first Mass may probably have taken place in 1832, when he began his trips to Cabotville. His first recorded visit was on April 24, 1836 (a Sunday), when he performed a marriage;⁸³ but it is certain that he had been attending the place for "some years" previously.⁸⁴ Later in this same year Father Peter Walsh reported that there were 179 Catholics in Springfield.⁸⁵ With the beginning of railroad-building in 1837, their numbers increased more rapidly, and must have approximated those of Cabotville.

The four places hitherto mentioned had been attended by Father Fitton every two or three months. In addition he had mission stations at Hadley, Amherst, Ware, Thorndike, Wilbraham, and Palmer. Northward the farthest point he is known to have reached in his missionary tours was Greenfield. Westward he at times pushed his way into Berkshire County as far

⁸¹ Father Fitton to Bishop Fenwick, Jan. 26, 1836 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁸² *Sketches*, p. 312.

⁸³ *Marriage Register of Holy Trinity Church, Hartford.*

⁸⁴ Father Fitton to Bishop Fenwick, Jan. 26, 1836 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁸⁵ *Memoranda*, Oct. 25, 1836.

as Great Barrington and Sheffield. After his removal to Worcester in 1836, Father Walsh provisionally and Father Brady definitively took over Springfield, Cabotville, Westfield, and the other missions of Hampden and Berkshire Counties, which they continued zealously to attend; but Father Fitton retained Northampton, with the other posts of Hampshire and Franklin Counties, for seven years still.

Central Massachusetts, except for Father Woodley's few visits, had remained entirely untouched by the Church down to 1832. In August of that year the Bishop, returning from a week's sojourn at Hartford, where he was probably impressed with the success of Father Fitton's far-flung apostolate, and stopping off for the first time at Worcester, where the importance of that rising town must have been brought home to him, decided to add it also to the sphere of the Hartford mission.⁸⁶ Father Fitton made at least one trip into his new territory that autumn.⁸⁷ But the real beginning of the central Massachusetts mission was made in 1833.⁸⁸

Early in that year Bishop Fenwick's and Father Fitton's attention was called to Millbury, a factory town just southeast of Worcester, by the appeal of two zealous young Catholics, John Gaffney and Robert Laverty, that a priest be sent to them. Father Fitton responded to this request by coming repeatedly to Millbury, saying Mass there several times for the Catholics of all the district around, making the town during that year the headquarters of his new mission.⁸⁹ From the spring of 1833 onward, he also paid frequent visits to Webster, Dudley, Leices-

⁸⁶ His first idea was that Father McDermott, who was then being sent to assist Father Fitton, should have the care of this and other stations more remote from Hartford. He wrote to the *Association de la Propagation de la Foi*, Sept. 26, 1832: "Les besoins de la population de cette partie de mon diocèse m'ont décidé, depuis mon retour, à y envoyer un Missionnaire de plus. Les stations que je lui ai fixées sont à Worcester, Springfield, New-London, New Haven, et Middletown" (*Annales*, VI, 1833, 266).

⁸⁷ The Hartford marriage register shows him to have officiated at Webster and South Leicester, Mass., on Oct. 21st and 22nd respectively.

⁸⁸ It is with 1833 that Father Fitton begins his baptism and marriage registers of the "Worcester Mission," which are still preserved at St. John's Church in that city—an invaluable source for the Catholic history of the whole region.

⁸⁹ *Worcester Spy*, April 5, 1884; *Catholic Messenger*, July 15, 1921.

ter, Oxford, and Worcester, finding about twenty Catholics in each of these places.⁹⁰

By the end of the year these little groups desired to band together to build a church, and as the place most conveniently accessible to all of them they designated Worcester. For what seemed to them the priceless privilege of having Mass once a month, they promised to subscribe five hundred dollars, and in addition they severally promised fifty cents to one dollar per month from their meagre earnings. Father Fitton warmly championed the project, urging the importance of "erecting a citadel in the only remaining town of note on the grand mail-route between Baltimore, Maryland, and Eastport, Maine."⁹¹ It might seem quixotic to dream of building a church in a town containing hardly more than a score of Catholics, and with only about one hundred in all the country for twenty miles around. But, as he says in his *Sketches*,⁹² "the Missionary . . . received from his venerated and beloved Bishop permission to do as to him seemed best."

Accordingly, on Sunday, April 6, 1834, the faithful of Worcester and all the neighboring towns were assembled for what has lingered in the local tradition as the first public Mass celebrated in that city — and what appears to have been at least the first Mass said there by Father Fitton. Much discussion has raged as to the place chosen for this historic occasion. In all probability, it was an upper room, occupied by a mechanic named McKillup, in Silas Bailey's new stone building on the north side of Front Street, and just west of the Blackstone Canal.⁹³ Sixty men were present, with some women and children. "After service was over," a sympathetic Protestant wrote in his diary, "a subscription was taken with the view of raising money to erect a chapel or church, and, what is very surprising, \$500 were soon subscribed. And in addition to this, \$100 was procured to defray Mr. Fitton's expense from Hartford here

⁹⁰ Father Fitton to Bishop Fenwick, Dec. 6, 1833 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁹¹ Letter to Bishop Fenwick, Dec. 6, 1833 (*loc. cit.*).

⁹² Pp. 287-288.

⁹³ F. G. Stiles, "Recollections of Front Street, Worcester, in the Thirties," Worcester Society of Antiquity, *Proceedings for 1896*, no. XLVII, p. 307.

and to enable him to visit the Catholics in different places in Massachusetts and Connecticut.”⁹⁴

Encouraged by this splendid beginning, Father Fitton at once set out to find a church lot. The usual difficulty presented itself. It is said that a man named Browne, who had agreed to sell, tore up the deed in the priest's presence when he heard that his land was to be used for a Catholic church.⁹⁵ But when it was becoming doubtful whether a site could be obtained, a generous Protestant came to the rescue: William Lincoln, the historian of Worcester, a brother of Governor Levi Lincoln of Massachusetts and Governor Enoch Lincoln of Maine. On May 1, 1834, he purchased for six hundred dollars for the use of the Catholics three lots of pasture land on what was then called “Flagg's Plain” — now the site of St. John's Church, in the heart of Worcester.⁹⁶ Here on July 7th Father Fitton laid the cornerstone of “Christ's Church.”

Another piece of good fortune was that that spring work had begun on the Worcester end of the railroad to Boston, bringing crowds of Catholic toilers into the vicinity. Father Fitton assiduously traveled up and down the line collecting money for building, and they responded so generously that an old record declares that the Worcester church “was erected by the Irish laborers employed on the railroad.”⁹⁷ Many of them, after their hard day's work, turned out at night, as did the Catholic men residing in the town, to excavate for the foundations of the church. While the edifice was under construction, Mass was said about once a month in McKillup's upper room, at the “Elephant Tavern” on the south side of Front Street, or in the open air. By 1836 Worcester's first church, a humble wooden structure, of sixty-four feet by thirty-two, was completed.

⁹⁴ “Diary of Christopher Columbus Baldwin,” American Antiquarian Society, *Transactions and Collections*, VIII (Worcester, 1901), 288 f.

⁹⁵ *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 833 f.

⁹⁶ *Worcester County Land Deeds*, book 298, p. 517. Father Fitton paid back the \$600 and acquired title to the land only on Dec. 14, 1835 (*ibid.*, book 312, p. 130).

⁹⁷ *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 835.

Its founder's foresight had already been demonstrated: in three years the congregation had grown to nearly three hundred.⁹⁸ Meanwhile, he had been extending his missionary activity throughout most of central Massachusetts. Between 1833 and 1838 he is known to have officiated, and often very frequently, eastward at Grafton, Westboro, Saxonville, Waltham, and Medway; down the Blackstone Valley at Millbury, Northbridge, Uxbridge, Blackstone, Waterford, and Woonsocket (Rhode Island); southward at Auburn, Sutton, Oxford, Webster, Dudley; westward at Cherry Valley, South Leicester, Clappville (Rochdale), New England Village, Charleton, Spencer, Brookfield, Warren; northward at Barre and Templeton.

VIII

The eight years surveyed in this chapter had assuredly witnessed an impressive growth of the Church in New England. The establishment of Catholic churches in cities as important as Providence, Taunton, Fall River, New Haven, Worcester, Burlington, Augusta, and Bangor was a signal achievement; but still more gratifying, perhaps, was the expansion of the Church, hitherto chiefly confined to the coastal regions, into the interior and into almost every part of the interior except central and northern New Hampshire. This was, perhaps, the golden age of the pioneer priests, and we may well be proud of such great missionaries as Fathers Fitton, O'Callaghan, Daly, Ryan, the Bradys, or McDermott. When Bishop Fenwick began his rule in 1825, Boston was wellnigh the weakest among the nine dioceses in the United States as measured by the number either of priests or of churches. By the end of 1838, with twenty-six priests and thirty-one churches, it had risen to the seventh place in both respects among the sixteen dioceses then existing.

⁹⁸ William Lincoln, *History of Worcester, Massachusetts, from Its Earliest Settlement to September, 1836* (Worcester, 1837), p. 219.

In the whole of the foregoing account I have made much use of the notebooks left by the late Richard O'Flynn, for fifty years an eminent citizen of Worcester, who had the happy habit of recording every bit of information he could pick up about the fortunes of the Church and of the Irish in that vicinity. These notebooks, which were made accessible to me by the kindness of his grandson, Mr. George B. O'Flynn, form a source of unequalled value for the early Catholic history of Worcester.

CHAPTER VII

THE REVIVAL OF OPPOSITION (1825-1834)

I

ANOTHER RESULT of the rising flood of immigration was, unfortunately but perhaps inevitably, a recrudescence of the old hostility of Protestant and Anglo-Saxon America towards the Catholic Church and the Irish. In the 1820's there began for the first time since the American Revolution, one of those periodical outbursts of religious and racial intolerance which have marked our history in the past hundred years, and of which the chief organized manifestations have been the Native American movement of the thirties and forties, the Know-Nothing movement of the fifties, the "A.P.A." movement of the nineties, and the Ku Klux Klan in the early twentieth century.¹

In the history of human delusions there are few stranger or more painful phenomena than the great Protestant legend about "Popery." Fabricated in the sixteenth century by fanatical controversialists and by statesmen following very mundane ends, and imposed through many generations by every kind of political, nationalistic, and social pressure and by every form of ecclesiastical, educational, and literary propaganda, this astounding set of misconceptions, exaggerations, misrepresentations, and downright lies came to be a sacrosanct tradition and almost a dogma of faith in all Protestant countries, but especially in English-speaking lands. In one of his most poignant books Cardinal Newman has furnished an unsurpassed analysis

¹ Cf. the very competent and impartial survey of the earlier phases of this agitation by Professor Ray A. Billington, *The Protestant Crusade, 1800-1860: a Study of the Origins of American Nativism* (New York, 1938); Peter Condon, "Constitutional Freedom of Religion and the Revivals of Religious Intolerance," *U.S. Cath. Hist. Soc., Records and Studies*, II (1901), 401-431; III (1903), 92-114; IV (1905), 145-217; V (1909), 426-487; Michael Williams, *The Shadow of the Pope* (New York and London, 1932).

of this "Protestant view of Catholicism"; and his conclusion was that this view found its basis in fable, its sustaining power in tradition, its vitality in prejudice, its intellectual ground in principles falsely ascribed to Catholics, and its protection in ignorance.² At all events, the legend supplied a comprehensive and stereotyped picture of Catholic doctrine, worship, morals, and history, and an arsenal of "traditional fictions, sophisms, calumnies, mockeries, sarcasms, and invectives"³ with which Catholics were to be assailed. That grotesquely distorted picture could inspire only feelings of abhorrence, fear, and hatred towards the Church, and dislike, distrust, and contempt towards individual Catholics. For two centuries or more that picture gripped the minds of the vast majority of Protestants, and even down to our own day it has not altogether lost its ancient power.

Nowhere else, save perhaps in Scotland and Ulster, was this tradition about "Popery" more deeply implanted than in colonial New England, as has been brought out in the first volume of this work. Closely entwined with it, as we have also seen, was an almost equally strong prejudice against the Irish, at least against the Catholic Irish. This antipathy, likewise, was mainly an echo of the English tradition, for the New Englanders took pains to avoid direct contact with Irish "Papists" by admitting as few of them as possible into their colonies.

It was true that during the American Revolution and for a generation or so after it these prejudices seemed to be diminishing or even dying away. The patriotism displayed by Catholics during that struggle; the invaluable aid received by the United States from two foremost Catholic nations, France and Spain; the general trend of the time towards liberal ideas; the new enthusiasm for freedom, equality, reason, and tolerance; the weakening hold of Calvinism and the "Standing Order" upon the community; the unanswerable arguments supplied by the lives of Father Matignon and Bishop Cheverus — such were some of the factors conducing to this change. Moreover, Ca-

² *Lectures on the Present Position of Catholics in England, Addressed to the Brothers of the Oratory in the Summer of 1851* (New impression, New York and London, 1924).

³ Newman, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

tholicism at that time could scarcely seem, even to the most distrustful, to offer any serious danger. There were no longer any powerful and hostile Catholic nations on our frontiers. Within the Republic the Catholic population was very small in numbers. Immigration down to 1815 was restricted to very modest proportions. Without altogether renouncing old prejudices, Americans could safely indulge in the satisfaction of putting their new principles into practice by extending toleration and equal rights even to "Papists," when the latter seemed destined to remain but an insignificant minority, incapable of doing any harm if they wanted to.

It is pleasant to recall that even after a new wave of opposition to the Church began to rise, the more liberal tendencies of the post-Revolutionary period persisted in many quarters. They persisted notably in the higher strata of society, among people who, by education, wider culture, or travel, had largely freed themselves from the bigotry and provincialism of the colonial period and had gained some inkling, at least, of what the Catholic Church had meant and done for the world. They persisted also among the broader circles of plain common people who had convinced themselves from contacts with Catholics that at least a good part of the old "No Popery" tradition was clearly not true; or among the growing number of New Englanders who had become "unchurched" while remaining keenly interested in religion, and who were therefore willing to give any religious point of view a fair hearing; or among those who, out of attachment to democratic principles and a sense of fair play, desired that Catholics should enjoy the same rights and the same even-handed justice as anybody else.

In many a New England community the beginnings of the Church were assisted by the friendly help or generous donations of leading Protestant citizens. David Wilkinson, of Pawtucket, Philip Allen, of Providence, Colonel Lincoln, of Canton, Kirk Boott, of Lowell, William Lincoln, of Worcester, and Colonel Hyde, of Burlington, are examples of such benefactors among many that might be named. Bishop Fenwick's diary contains innumerable allusions to the crowds of Protestants who at-

tended Catholic church services, particularly on great occasions; and while many of these people may have been drawn only by idle curiosity, it may be supposed that many others came out of an open-minded desire to hear what these much-denounced Catholics had to say for themselves. Very frequently, too, the Bishop or his priests were invited to preach in Protestant churches, or to address a whole village community gathered in the schoolhouse. Not a few of the secular newspapers maintained a fair, and sometimes a very friendly, attitude towards Catholics. And at least one Protestant denomination, the Unitarians, earned titles to our lasting gratitude at that time. Although farthest removed from us of all the Protestant churches in their theological beliefs, they distinguished themselves by their freedom from vulgar anti-Catholic prejudices, their opposition to bigotry and persecution, their consistent championship of tolerance and justice to Catholics. Bishop Fenwick, writing to France in 1831, after describing the bitterness of other denominations against the Church, added: "I must say that it is not the same with the Unitarians, and that on all occasions they show themselves favorable to the Catholics." ⁴ And the *Boston Pilot* some years later remarked of the Unitarians that "their press and pulpit have always been distinguished for . . . courtesy and charity towards their Roman Catholic brethren. . . ." ⁵

II

While many Americans were thus coming to entertain milder and, we think, juster sentiments about the Church, and various circumstances had combined to produce for a time a comparative cessation of anti-Catholic agitation, nevertheless, in the minds of the majority, it would seem, the old hostility to "Popery" was merely dormant, always ready to flare up again whenever stimulated by new conditions. By the 1820's such conditions had appeared.

⁴ Letter of Sept. 6, in *Annales de l'Association de la Propagation de la Foi*, V (1832), 445.

⁵ Sept. 8, 1838.

In point of time, at least, the first cause of the renewal of opposition was the great revival of Evangelical Protestantism, which began in New England about 1797, quickly overspread the country, and continued at a high pitch of intensity down to the Civil War. This "Second Awakening" may be considered genetically as a reflex of the Evangelical Revival in Great Britain, started by the Wesleys and Whitefield around 1738; or, in a broader way, as a part of the general reaction of the Protestant world against the latitudinarianism, the deism, the ecclesiastical dryness and dullness, the widespread irreligion of the eighteenth century. Considered dogmatically, it was what would be called today a "fundamentalist" movement: a fierce and almost desperate effort to restore as much of sixteenth-century Protestant orthodoxy as the nineteenth century might be prepared to accept. One momentous result of this doctrinal reaction was the historic schism, consummated between 1815 and 1825, within the ranks of that Congregational Church which for two centuries had dominated the religious life of New England: the split through which the liberal minority, representing the political, social, and intellectual élite of Boston and vicinity, separated from the "orthodox" majority to form the new Unitarian Church. But even more characteristic of the awakening than the return to dogma was its emphasis upon religious experience: upon the operations of "the Spirit" in individual souls through "conversion," and in whole congregations and communities through "revivals." Revivalism was, indeed, the mainspring of the whole movement. Its technique was constantly being improved upon, whether by the introduction of more popular or sensational methods (such as "the New Measures" of 1826), the appearance of professional "evangelists," and the introduction of the "protracted meetings" so popular between 1825 and 1835, at which ministers and faithful for miles around gathered at one church for three or four days of continuous religious exercises. Wave after wave of revivals swept over the country, those of the late 1820's at Boston and of 1831-1833 throughout New England outstripping all previous records. Congregationalists, Baptists, Methodists, and

the smaller kindred sects seemed to live in a state of almost continuous religious excitement. Whatever exaggerations or emotional excesses may have occurred, and whatever the repercussions may have been for Catholics, there is no denying the force and fervor of the movement or its many laudable and salutary results.

One impressive result was the launching of innumerable new enterprises intended to extend "the kingdom of Christ" throughout the country and throughout the world. The first three decades of the nineteenth century were the "period of organizations" in the history of American Protestantism. Here, too, Great Britain, and particularly the Nonconformist churches of that country, set the example and supplied the model in almost every field of effort. Quickly taking the cue, the American Evangelical churches plunged into a whirlwind of organizing activity, local, national, and interdenominational. Foreign missionary societies, home missionary societies, Bible societies, tract societies, Sunday school unions; societies for educating young men for the ministry, for "the moral and religious instruction of the poor," for the amelioration of seamen, for the conversion of the Jews, for the settlement of American negroes in Africa, for "the relief of aged, indigent females," for "the fatherless and widows," for the suppression of intemperance, for the improvement of prisons, for aiding discharged convicts, etc., etc. — such were some of the fruits of the reigning religious and humanitarian enthusiasm. It was characteristic of the time that the annual meeting of the American Bible Society in 1829 resolved within two years to have furnished every destitute family in the United States with a copy of the sacred volume; and in 1833 — without having succeeded very notably with this more modest task — the Society undertook within twenty years to provide a Bible for every destitute family in the world.

Of particular importance was the development of the religious press. The denominational and missionary magazines which began to appear about the year 1800 were quickly followed by the weekly newspapers, of which the pioneer was the Congregationalist *Boston Recorder*, in 1816. Other influential

weeklies soon sprang up: at Boston the Baptist *Christian Watchman* (1819), the Unitarian *Christian Register* (1821), the Methodist *Zion's Herald* (1823), the Episcopalian *Christian Witness* (1835); at Hartford the Congregationalist *Connecticut Observer* and the *Episcopal Watchman*; at Portland the Congregationalist *Christian Mirror*; and many more.

This remarkable revival of Protestant zeal and activity could scarcely fail to produce a new attack upon Catholicism. In striving to vindicate and reassert the theology of the Reformation, the Evangelicals quite naturally felt it a duty to launch out vigorously against the opposing systems — against Unitarians on the one side and “Romanists” on the other. In undertaking a vast movement for the evangelization of the world, they came into multiple contacts with a “papal hierarchy” and with populations “languishing under the darkness of Popery” who manifested an exasperating reluctance to go over to “the pure Gospel.” Political and patriotic considerations came into play. The Evangelicals were accustomed to contrast the sober and well-ordered liberty of America with the wild radicalism and sanguinary excesses of the French Revolution — which they ascribed to infidelity — and with the reactionary despotisms then prevailing on the Continent — which they believed to be in league with the Church of Rome. The conclusion appeared to them evident that the freedom, the prosperity, the marvelous good fortune of America were based on orthodox Protestantism, the open Bible, the right of private judgment, the “Christian Sabbath,” the strict morality of Puritans and Methodists; and that these bulwarks of the Republic must be staunchly defended against infidel and “Papist” infiltrations. Finally, the Evangelicals were honorably concerned about ameliorating social conditions, but they found it difficult to decide whether the worst social evil was slavery or “rum” or the “superstitions,” “delusions,” and “impostures” of Romanism.

Even before there was any serious alarm over the growth of Catholicity in the United States, the innate antipathy of the rising Evangelical movement to “Popery” made itself apparent. The religious weeklies, in most cases hostile from the outset,

increasingly rang the changes on "Popish intolerance," "Roman Catholic persecution," "idolatry of Popery," "Roman Catholic superstitions," "Romish deceptions," "perverted Christianity," etc., etc.⁶ At first the themes for such outbursts were usually furnished by conditions and events abroad. Highly colored reports from missionaries depicted the iniquities of Romanism in Canada or Cuba, Spain, Ireland, Malta, or India. The re-establishment of the Jesuit Order, the condemnation of the Bible societies by Pius VII, and the brief restoration of the Inquisition by the King of Spain drew much castigation from press and pulpit. The long controversy over the question of Catholic Emancipation in the United Kingdom — a controversy which raged, with some intermissions, from the "No Popery" elections of 1807 down to O'Connell's triumph in 1829 — called forth an immense flood of anti-Catholic books, pamphlets, tracts, and articles, many of which were quickly reprinted in this country and helped much to swell the tide of anti-Catholic feeling here.

At home, even while Catholics were not attracting attention by their numbers, occasions for friction were not lacking. The agents of the various societies who scoured the Irish sections of Boston to distribute the King James Bible, tracts, oral religious instruction, and invitations to attend Protestant worship, encountered a pretty general refusal on the part of these "priest-ridden" people to accept their well-meant offers. The Protestant Sunday schools lately set up in the same sections were largely decimated in 1826, when Bishop Fenwick forbade Catholic children to attend them. All this seemed to prove once more that the Romish clergy "hated the Bible" and were determined to keep their people in ignorance.⁷ Even Dr. Fenwick's appointment as bishop had evoked a protest from the *Boston Recorder*. "So, it seems," wrote that Argus-eyed journal,

⁶ *Boston Recorder*, May 5, 1818, Jan. 1, 1820, April 19, 1821; *Christian Watchman*, Jan. 1, 22, 1820, Nov. 23, 1822.

⁷ Cf. *Annual Report of the Boston Society for the Religious and Moral Instruction of the Poor*, IX (1825), 10; X (1826), 14, 19 f.; XI (1827), 6, 14-16; XII (1828), 15; *Annual Report of the American Bible Society*, VII (1823), 85-87; X (1826), 85 f.; XII (1828), 70-72; Billington, *The Protestant Crusade*, pp. 42 f.

"the Pope of Rome sends over his high-sounding titles to this republican country, appointing and dismissing at pleasure. Let this influence become general — let the Roman Catholic religion become the general religion of the land — and what will become of our boasted liberty and free institutions?"⁸ It was equally ominous that the new prelate was a Jesuit. It was probably to meet the perils arising from that fact that the same newspaper next year published a series of articles reviewing in scathing fashion the "rise, progress, and principles" of that order and ending with the italicized warning that "*the Jesuits are taking deep root in the United States.*"⁹ If the Catholic Church encountered such mounting bitterness when it was supposed to be small and weak in this country, what would be the anger and alarm when it was rather suddenly found to be growing with amazing rapidity?

III

The second main cause of the revival of opposition was immigration, which for New England meant chiefly that of Irish Catholics.

The newcomers, it is only fair to say, found not a few friends in the land of the Puritans. Manufacturers and other employers generally welcomed them. The Democratic party, true to its traditions, took them to its heart, championed their rights, and confidently expected their votes. The cause of Ireland as against England was too analogous to that for which we had once fought not to evoke a pretty general sympathy, which was freely expressed on public occasions. And doubtless in individual contacts with countless scions of the older stock the exiles came to know the real kindness and warm-heartedness that underlie the somewhat glacial New England manner.

Nevertheless, the majority of the natives appear to have viewed this steadily swelling influx of aliens and adherents of a detested creed with dislike and apprehension — not to say horror. To many it must have seemed like an irruption of

⁸ Sept. 16, 1825.

⁹ *Boston Recorder*, Sept. 8 to Oct. 6, 1826.

Goths and Vandals. Racial and religious prejudices combined to raise up against these immigrants an antipathy such as scarcely any other incoming stock has had to meet.

Dislike, distrust, and disdain for the Irish as a race were sentiments deeply ingrained in the New England mind for many reasons. There was the old English tradition brought over by the first colonists—the Elizabethan tradition about the “wild Irish,” who deserved only to be killed off like red Indians. This was reinforced in colonial days by horrifying tales about the Ulster Massacre, or scornful tales about Londonderry and the battle of the Boyne. In the post-Revolutionary period the Federalists, with their strong pro-British leanings, had launched a political campaign against Irish immigrants which did much to fix the allegiance of the latter permanently on the side of the Democratic party. In the early nineteenth century New England continued to take its opinions of the Irish chiefly from British sources: from books that painted in very black colors the conditions and the people in “John Bull’s other island”; from articles in the Tory magazines and reprints from the Nonconformist press. The schoolbooks of the time, which in general were wont to describe Catholic nations as “ignorant,” “lazy,” “deceitful,” “cruel,” “licentious,” and “superstitious,” drilled into youthful New Englanders particularly unfavorable notions about the Celtic character. Even a relatively well-disposed writer like “Peter Parley” (Samuel G. Goodrich) would regale his readers with such statements about the Irish as that they set apart St. Patrick’s Day “for going to church, drinking whiskey, and breaking each other’s heads with clubs.”¹⁰

When, therefore, Irish immigrants began to arrive here in great numbers, people were prepared in advance to find their worst suspicions realized. Indeed, the first contacts of two races so vastly different in background, temperament, and outlook could scarcely fail to produce some repulsion on both sides. The natives were appalled at the poverty, the frequent illiteracy, the sometimes unkempt appearance, the “uncouth

¹⁰ *Peter Parley’s Common School History* (9th ed.: Philadelphia, 1841), p. 312.

brogue," the Old World customs, the light-heartedness and "frivolity" (dancing, for instance, especially on Saturday nights!), and many other traits of the newcomers. The newcomers were amazed or amused at what they thought the gruesome faces, the queer Yankee dialect and nasal twang, the cold and aloof manners, the gloomy Puritan religion, the dreary Sabbath-keeping, the ponderous, Hebraic names, the joyless, stern existence, the apparent absorption only in endless drudgery and money-making, of the natives.¹¹

Doubtless there was much misunderstanding, exaggeration, and unfairness on both sides. The Irish, for instance, were often reproached for being addicted to drunkenness, fighting, and rioting — and there is no denying that ground was sometimes given for these charges, particularly by the railroad construction gangs;¹² but anyone who is at all familiar with our history in that hard-drinking, roisterous, and lawless age knows that in such respects the native Americans of that time were least of all entitled to throw stones. The unfairness is also manifest in the frequently raised charge of "clannishness" and "holding aloof from the rest of the community." That the Irish refused to abandon their own faith for the religion dominant in their new home and that they kept up a deep love for their native country — these are only titles to our respect; and if they usually congregated together in certain sections of our cities and consorted chiefly with "people of their own kind," in view of the cold reception they so often encountered from the Yankees, one wonders what else they could have been expected to do.

In addition to the general charges connected with race, char-

¹¹ The New Englanders' first impressions of the Irish have been described by many writers. The Irish-Americans' impressions of the New Englanders, which have been much less frequently set forth, are described with candor and humor by His Eminence, William Cardinal O'Connell, in his *Recollections of Seventy Years* (Boston and New York, 1934), pp. 18 ff.

¹² The contentions and disorders that occasionally arose among the immigrants have been frankly discussed by various Catholic historians of Irish blood, notably by Rev. (later Archbishop) Austin Dowling, in *The Catholic Church in New England*, I, 361-363; by Rev. John H. McKenna, *The Centenary Story of Old St. Mary's, Pawtucket, R.I., 1829-1929*, p. 5; and Rev. J. O'Hanlon, *The Irish Emigrants' Guide to the United States* (Boston, 1851), pp. 82-85.

acter, and temperament, the Irish were assailed for both economic and political reasons. They were reproached for accepting unduly low wages and for lowering the American standard of living. The Yankee laborer, teamster, or factory hand who had been "done out of his job" by an Irishman was likely to have strong opinions about the dangers of this foreign invasion for the Protestant religion and "our free institutions." Immigration undoubtedly occasioned a rise in the poor rates and an added strain upon charitable institutions, which were much resented, the more so as it was commonly, and with some justice, believed that the public authorities in the United Kingdom were assisting their poor to emigrate to the United States, in order to be rid of the burden of supporting them. As early as 1820, Massachusetts took the lead among the States in trying to restrict the importation of impoverished aliens by an act requiring the captains of vessels to file bonds intended to guarantee the local authorities against the danger of having to support the immigrants landed from their ships.¹³ This law, however, proved so ineffective in practice that for many years there was agitation for sterner measures to prevent the dumping of "foreign paupers and criminals" upon our shores.

In politics the Irish began to be a factor of some consequence in this region about 1828. Describing the maneuvers of the Jacksonian (Democratic) managers at Boston just before the presidential election of that year, a very hostile contemporary wrote:

Dreading all respectable competitors in the expected distribution of offices, they sought recruits only in the kennels and gutters. Proclaiming Jackson an Irishman, they planted their flag in the ménage of Broadstreet; and holding him up as the champion of the poor against the rich, they received, with "hugs fraternal," the tenants of poor-houses and penitentiaries.

And of the ensuing Democratic victory celebration on March 4, 1829 (the day of Andrew Jackson's inauguration), the same

¹³ *Mass. Acts of 1820*, chapter 290.

disgruntled author declared: "All Broad-street was invited, as the peculiar favorites of the *Irish* President." ¹⁴

The rival parties, the Federalists, the Adams Republicans, and the Whigs, who successively arose to oppose the Jeffersonian and Jacksonian Democrats, and who all essentially represented the rich as against the poor, were full of rancor over their failure to attract the immigrant vote, and were all the more inclined to denounce the Irish influence in politics and to favor the idea of a change in the naturalization laws. As early as 1827 and 1828 their newspapers were urging that it was "a curse" that foreigners, who, "though legally naturalized, are naturally and morally alien to our feelings, manners, and institutions," should be admitted to the suffrage and even to the right of being elected to public office. "We would have none such in any office above that of door-keeper in a public building." ¹⁵

Nevertheless, it would seem that the alarm and the outcry over immigration were not due primarily either to racial prejudice against the Irish or to economic or political reasons. Irish Protestants and other incoming non-Catholics aroused little opposition. The main causes of the ensuing agitation were the religion of the Irish and the fact that they were bringing about a most unexpected and unwelcome growth of the Catholic Church.

IV

Almost down to the middle of the 1820's the Evangelicals seem to have been little informed or concerned about the increase of Catholicism in the United States. Around the years 1824 and 1825, as fuller information reached them, they began to show some apprehension; and their hitherto only occasional sniping against "Popery" turned into heavier and more continuous firing. By about 1828, what with the Irish "invasion"

¹⁴ John Barton Derby, *Political Reminiscences, Including a Sketch of the Origin and History of the "Statesman Party"* (Boston, 1835), pp. 27, 46.

¹⁵ John B. McMaster, *A History of the People of the United States from the Revolution to the Civil War*, VI (New York, 1906), 85.

proceeding amain, with Catholic churches springing up a little bit all over New England, with still greater Catholic progress reported elsewhere, particularly in the West, and with stories circulating that the Pope and various societies in Europe were sending vast sums of money and battalions of Jesuits to achieve the conquest of America, apprehension was developing into serious alarm.

Of the rather sudden stiffening of the Evangelical attitude at that moment, a Unitarian controversialist wrote in 1830:

More than two years ago, the alarm that the Catholics were increasing in our free country was loudly sounded. A violent attack was then commenced upon their opinions and measures. Base suspicions respecting their motives and cruel insinuations respecting their designs were whispered through the orthodox ranks. Parents were urged, a little beyond the bonds of strict modesty, to take their children from Catholic seminaries. Inflammatory appeals were fulminated from many an evangelical pulpit. Public meetings of the clergy were harangued on this most alarming topic. And all this noise, and warning, and denunciation, for what cause? Simply because the scattered members of the mother church, in this land of boasted freedom, had thought proper to form themselves into regular societies; to erect churches for their own accommodation; and to recommend their ancient faith and forms of worship to Protestant Christians by their conversation, preaching, and publications. . . .¹⁶

By 1829 all the great guns were booming. It was clear that a major battle had commenced, and that battle was to continue, with only occasional lulls, for over thirty years. It has become customary to designate the movement out of which this contest grew and by which it was maintained as Nativism, i.e., an effort of the older stock to protect American institutions and ideals against incoming elements which they regarded as inevitably alien and hostile to their way of life. This term it may be useful to retain, but it should be emphasized that

¹⁶ Rev. Bernard Whitman, *Two Letters to the Rev. Moses Stuart on the Subject of Religious Liberty* (2nd ed.: Boston, 1831 — written Dec., 1830), p. 142.

the primary mainspring of Nativism was always religious prejudice, and that the enemy chiefly and almost exclusively envisaged by the movement was the Catholic Church and its adherents.¹⁷ The religious aspects of the struggle were particularly manifest in its early stages — in the years here under discussion — when the principal onslaught was conducted by Evangelical ministers and their newspapers, and when the doctrines, worship, and practices of the Catholic Church were the chief objects of attack.

To consider first, then, this intellectual or theological side of the campaign — Catholicism now came to be incessantly assailed, in sermons, books, tracts, and articles in the religious press, with all the familiar and thousand-times refuted charges supplied by Protestant legend. The main heads of this comprehensive indictment may be summed up as follows:

"Popery" was an utterly false religion, the fruit of "the great apostasy," Christian only in name, and in fact as bad as paganism or infidelity. It refused to accept the Bible as the rule of faith, denied that sacred volume to the people, and even taught them to hate it. Instead it set up a false rule of faith — corrupt, human tradition and the despotic authority of a pretended, infallible Church — thus forcing men to surrender their minds and consciences to the sway of unscrupulous and tyrannical priests. The religious system imposed by these means was a tissue of "soul-destroying superstitions," "artful impostures," and "senseless absurdities." In particular, it taught men to worship saints, relics, images more than God Himself; to adore the Virgin Mary as a goddess more powerful than her divine Son; and in the Mass to practice a worse than heathen idolatry.

Catholicism was also an immoral system. It corrupted and trampled upon the Commandments of God. It taught its deluded or vicious followers that pardon for sins, past, present,

¹⁷ Outstanding among studies of this subject for this region are: Sister Loyola, S.H., S.N.D., "Bishop Benedict J. Fenwick and Anti-Catholicism in New England, 1829-1845," U.S. Cath. Hist. Soc., *Records and Studies*, XXVII (New York, 1937), 99-256; and Carroll J. Noonan, *Nativism in Connecticut, 1829-1860* (Washington, 1938).

or future, could be purchased for money in the confessional or through the sale of indulgences. It impressed upon them that it could free them from all moral obligations; that faith need not and should not be kept with heretics; and that all crimes committed for the advantage of the Church were just and holy actions. Catholic priests, usually bent on gulling and fleecing their flocks, encouraged them in vice both in order to maintain their ascendancy over them and in order to cover up their own irregularities. Catholic schools were seminaries of vice, and monastic houses were worse. As to the morals of priests, monks, and nuns the vilest and most horrible things were sometimes darkly insinuated and sometimes brazenly asserted.¹⁸

The "Romish" Church was, above all things, a vast political machine, contrived and maintained for the purpose of enabling popes, prelates, and priests to wring untold sums of money out of the laity and to extend their domination throughout the world. Such a system was, of course, utterly incompatible with social, intellectual, or political progress. It could be maintained only by keeping people in the grossest ignorance and forbidding them to think for themselves on any subject, as was shown during the Middle Ages, when "Popery" was able to hold the world for a thousand years in "ignorance, superstition, and delusion," in "the gloom of midnight."¹⁹ It could also not maintain itself without frequent resort to the most wholesale and horrible persecutions. Here the Evangelical imagination ran riot with blood-curdling and fantastic tales about the astronomical number of the "saints" slaughtered on various occasions, notably under "Pope Julian" (a pope who never existed); about the "secrets of the Inquisition"; about the safely-to-be-assumed yearnings of modern Catholics to perpetrate a new St. Bartholomew's massacre on the first best occasion and

¹⁸ As one example among many of these shameful calumnies, see the letter from a Protestant missionary in Canada, printed in the *Connecticut Observer*, May 15, 1826.

¹⁹ Rev. Daniel Dunn, *The Importance of the Christian Ministry: a Sermon Preached before the American Society for Educating Pious Youth for the Gospel Ministry, at their Third Anniversary, Boston, Sept. 30, 1818* (Andover, 1818).

to "ride up to their horses' middles in the blood of Protestants." ²⁰

In fine, "Popery" was conceived as a "religion of demons"; the proof that "the devil has one church in Christendom"; ²¹ a system "concentrating the bad influence of all past systems" and in which "all the evils and corruptions of idolatry and imposture have been condensed and wielded with infernal wisdom and malignity against the Gospel." ²² To the minds of many Evangelicals at that time, there was nothing too bad to be believed and nothing too wild to be said about it. But the climax of their indictment was to "prove" once more that this "mystery of iniquity" was clearly foretold in the Bible. The Church of Rome or its head could and must be identified with Anti-Christ; the Man of Sin; the Great Harlot, full of the names of blasphemy and drunk with the blood of the saints; the Great Red Dragon; the Beast.

This monstrous system was now invading America. With hordes of "priest-driven human machines" pouring annually into the country — "a dead mass of ignorance and superstition" ²³ — the Roman Church already outnumbered any Protestant denomination and was becoming alarmingly powerful. It was not to be doubted that the Pope was straining every nerve and pouring out "the wealth laid up in ages past" to subjugate first "the great Valley" (the Middle West) and then the entire country. As early as 1829 the fear was voiced that the "crowned despots of Europe" would join in league with him, in order to overthrow by Catholic votes this — to them — hated republic.²⁴ At any rate, the advance of Popery could not fail to have the most fatal results. As one of the Boston religious journals wrote:

²⁰ *Connecticut Observer*, Sept. 21, 1829, April 12, 1830; *The Jesuit*, April 17, 1830; *Anti-Masonic Christian Herald*, April 7, 1830, June 6, 1832; *Christian Watchman*, March 6, 1835, etc.

²¹ *Christian Watchman*, Jan. 24, 1834.

²² Rev. Lyman Beecher, *Resources of the Adversary and Means of Their Destruction: a Sermon Preached Oct. 12, 1827, before the American Board of Missions at New York* (Boston, 1827), pp. 7, 13.

²³ *New York Churchman*, Jan. 31, 1835.

²⁴ Dr. Lyman Beecher's Thanksgiving address, reported in *U.S. Cath. Miscellany*, Feb. 13, 1830.

Let Roman Catholicism march forward with the same rapid strides in our beloved country, as it has lately, and soon may we expect the establishment of the Inquisition and all its accompanying horrors. Soon will our land reek with the blood of martyrs, and soon will the fair fabric of our liberties crumble to dust. This is no dream of an overheated imagination. It is an inevitable consequence of the firm establishment of Popery. All history confirms it, and from the nature of the case, it cannot be otherwise.²⁵

In this grave situation "to maintain Protestantism and to oppose Popery" was, it was said, "the cause of all mankind."²⁶ It is only fair to say that the Evangelicals did not at that time urge any legal restrictions against the Church, and still less did they suggest opposition by violence, although the fear and hatred they were disseminating were almost sure to engender it. They proposed only to arouse Protestants to greater counter-activity, and to warn the nation of the abominations, the designs, and the dangers of Romanism.

The warning was spread broadcast in many forms besides those already mentioned. The school textbooks of the time fairly reeked with anti-Catholic prejudice. In the *New England Primer*, which was even yet the favorite first reader, children still gazed with horror at the principal illustration — the Rev. John Rogers burned at the stake under "Bloody Mary" — and lisped the lines of the martyr's dying injunctions to "abhor that arrant Whore of Rome, and all her blasphemies." Governors and State legislatures were most formally and publicly warned of the horrors of "Popery" in election sermons delivered before them by Protestant chaplains.²⁷ Perhaps the most solemn warning of all was issued when the Congregationalist General Association of Massachusetts, at their annual meeting in 1830, drew up a pastoral letter to be read in all their churches, in which it was said:

²⁵ *Anti-Masonic Christian Herald*, June 6, 1832.

²⁶ *Boston Recorder*, Nov. 18, 1829.

²⁷ The New Hampshire election sermon of 1827, by the Rev. Nathaniel W. Williams, and the Massachusetts one of 1832, by the Rev. Paul Dean, are notable for their anti-Catholic tirades.

... the man of sin, having roused himself from his long season of slumber and exhaustion, after causing the whole of Europe to flow with the blood of the saints, is now attempting the subjugation of this land of the free. Already, with high confidence of success, has he commenced the work of spreading the delusions of popery over the valley of the Mississippi, and is even seeking to bring the heritage of the Pilgrims under the influence of that system, which shuts up the book of life, and would if possible bind the human mind in chains, and which has always proved more deadly hostile than any other, to the interests of the true church, and the souls of men.²⁸

V

To Bishop Fenwick, who in his first years here had cherished high hopes of unhampered, peaceful progress and of widespread conversions to the Church from among the native stock, this suddenly gathering storm must have come as a bitter sorrow and disillusionment. It must also have been a tragic experience for his people, both for the older New England Catholics, accustomed to more generous treatment in the recent past, and for the Irish immigrants, arriving here in the fond expectation of finding an ideal land of liberty, fraternity, and universal tolerance. At any rate, Bishop and people proceeded to organize what measures of defense were possible.

To that emergency we owe the beginnings of the Catholic press in New England. Bishop Cheverus, too, had suffered from the bigotry reviving around him in his later years here, and had thought of establishing a Catholic newspaper to counteract it.²⁹ The first such paper actually founded in this region was the *Catholic Press*, of Hartford, which from July, 1829, until early in 1833 conducted a brave contest against the unusually aggressive Calvinists of Connecticut. It seems probable that it was the enthusiasm aroused in Bishop Fenwick by his contacts with the Hartford group in the summer of 1829, just

²⁸ *Minutes of the General Association of Massachusetts, at their Session in Groton, June, 1830* (Boston, 1830), p. 28.

²⁹ Father Taylor to Archbishop Maréchal, June 19, 1823 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 20 T 23); *U.S. Cath. Intelligencer*, June 15, 1832.

when they were launching the *Press*, that decided him to undertake a similar enterprise in Boston. At all events, immediately after his return from Connecticut he announced the impending appearance of a new weekly, to be called *The Jesuit, or Catholic Sentinel*.³⁰ This title was, undoubtedly, a challenge to Protestant prejudice and aroused misgivings in many of the Bishop's friends. He seems to have selected it partly because in the preceding winter enemies of the Faith had proposed to start a journal to be called *The Anti-Jesuit*;³¹ partly because of honest pride in having been a son of St. Ignatius; and partly, perhaps, as a pledge that he meant to proceed in the most fearless and uncompromising way in championing Catholic principles.

The new paper made its first appearance on September 5, 1829. For the next five years, amid some changes of name (it was called the *United States Catholic Intelligencer* from October 1, 1831, to September 21, 1832, only to return in 1833-1834 to its original title), it continued to be edited by the Bishop, with the assistance down to 1833 of the brilliant but perfervid Dr. O'Flaherty.

Undoubtedly, it accomplished a great deal of good. Taking for its object "to explain, diffuse, and defend the principles of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church," it offered to New Englanders what they had never before received from the press, save for Father Thayer's brief attempt: a clear, cogent, scholarly, and authoritative exposition of the whole range of Catholic doctrines, worship, and practice. It also took up the cudgels with great vigor against the "crying calumnies and gross misrepresentations which in this section of our country have been so long, so unsparingly, so cruelly heaped upon the Church." It refuted these attacks, often in the most masterly fashion; and it sometimes carried the war into the enemy's country. The effect must have been very considerable both in

³⁰ The earliest evidence about this plan comes from his letter to Father Dzierozynski, S.J., July 22, 1829 (*Fordham Arch.*, 209 S 6), and the statements in the *Catholic Press*, July 25th, and *U.S. Cath. Miscellany*, Aug. 1st and 8th.

³¹ *Boston Recorder*, Dec. 11, 1828; Bishop Fenwick to Father Dzierozynski, S.J., Jan. 5, 1829 (*Fordham Arch.*, 209 X 3).

strengthening the faith of Catholics and in correcting the ideas of open-minded Protestants.

Unfortunately, however, *The Jesuit* in controversy often failed to maintain the principle *fortiter in re, suaviter in modo*, which the *United States Catholic Miscellany* of Charleston had admirably exemplified. Too frequently it succumbed to the temptation of answering the furious assaults of the Evangelicals by "twitching them in their own style," as Bishop Fenwick said, and returning insults and invectives in the same coin. Especially when Dr. O'Flaherty wielded the editorial pen, the paper was likely to indulge in deplorable tirades: for instance, against "the unholy alliance of mendacious tract-mongers, mercenary Bible-mongers, speculating missionaries, and modern Pharisees," this "host of foul libellers, scurrilous scribblers, and unprincipled calumniators, who exhaust the armory of falsehood to injure" the Church³² — tirades which exasperated the enemy still further and occasioned some shaking of heads in Catholic circles around the country.³³ Bishop Fenwick often admitted that the tone of his journal had been excessively sharp and must be moderated in the future, but this change he never quite succeeded in effecting. It must, of course, be recognized that the provocation from the other side was enormous and that in all kinds of controversy that was a hard-hitting age.

A second form of defense was the publication of apologetic and controversial pamphlets intended to counteract those with which the Evangelicals were flooding the country. Beginning in 1829, this activity was extensively carried on by the Catholic Tract Societies of Boston and Hartford.

A third and more dramatic enterprise was the Catholic Lectures of 1831, organized in reply to a resounding attack from a Calvinist pulpit. The assailant, the Rev. Dr. Lyman Beecher — father of Henry Ward Beecher and of the authoress of *Uncle's Tom's Cabin* — was perhaps the most prominent, gifted, and

³² *The Jesuit*, Oct. 31, 1829.

³³ Bishop Benedict Fenwick to Bishop Edward Fenwick, July 19, 1830 (in reply to what was evidently a frank criticism of *The Jesuit*); Bishop England to Father Bruté, Aug. 24, 1830; Rev. John Hughes to Bishop Purcell, Feb. 5, 1835 (all in *Notre Dame Archives*).

militant leader of the "Orthodox" revival in the Congregational Church; and since coming to Boston in 1826 to become pastor of the new Hanover Street Church, he had also made himself conspicuous by his constant attacks upon Catholicism. During the winter of 1830-1831 he delivered a course of Sunday evening lectures at Park Street Church on "Political Atheism," a course in which, while vigorously belaboring "Popery" on the one side, and Unitarians, Freemasons, and infidels on the other, he endeavored to prove that orthodox Protestantism and American freedom were one and inseparable. Although he was far from being as violent about the "Man of Sin" as many of his brethren were wont to be; still his reputation in the community, the publicity given to these lectures, and the unfair and even outrageous nature of much that was said, combined to arouse Catholics to indignation. Bishop Fenwick at once arranged a course of fifteen lectures in rebuttal, which were delivered at the Cathedral by himself and Dr. O'Flaherty alternately, from January 16th to May 1st.

These lectures attracted immense attention. It was the first time since Father Thayer's day that the Catholics in Boston had attempted a formal and public debate with Protestants and had undertaken to refute once for all the traditional charges against their Church. Night after night the Cathedral was crowded almost to suffocation, the greater part of the audience being commonly made up of Protestants. The two Catholic champions seem to have acquitted themselves much as they did in *The Jesuit*. Solid and convincing in setting forth the true beliefs of Catholics and refuting hostile misrepresentations, they somewhat marred the effect when they passed over to the counter-offensive. When the firing ceased, both sides, as is usual in such cases, claimed the victory. Bishop Fenwick believed that Calvinism had met with a crushing defeat and that Dr. Beecher's removal to Cincinnati in the following year was due to the fact that "our lectures have completely broken him up in this quarter."³⁴ To judge from the general tone of the Boston

³⁴ The Bishop to Rev. George Fenwick, S.J., March 17, 1831 (*Fordham Arch.*, 210 S 4); to Bishop Rosati, April 4, 1832 (*Ill. Cath. Hist. Rev.*, X, 149 f.).

secular press, it would seem that the outcome was favorable to the Catholics. Not a few conversions to the Faith are said to have resulted from these lectures, and to many a Protestant auditor it must have come as an amazing surprise that the Catholics had any case at all, and, still more, a case that could be presented with such force and logic. To Catholics, accustomed to having their religion denounced and ridiculed, it was a deep satisfaction to find the élite of Protestant Boston flocking to their church and an immense joy to hear their faith defended with all the learning of a Fenwick and the eloquence of an O'Flaherty. For many years they kept in warm and grateful remembrance those who had so splendidly championed their cause in these great debates.

VI

Meanwhile, the "No Popery" movement was beginning to assume other than merely theological forms.

Although there was yet no political party that made anti-Catholicism its distinctive issue, a tolerable substitute for one was furnished by the Anti-Masonic party, which played a considerable rôle in politics between 1828 and 1835, controlling for some years the government of Vermont and displaying much strength in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. Led by fighting parsons, reformers of various brands, and some very adroit politicians, and drawing its votes chiefly from the farmers and small-town folk, this party represented essentially the Evangelical conscience in politics: it was looked upon, as John Quincy Adams noted, as "nothing more than orthodoxy in disguise."³⁵ While centring their attack upon Freemasonry, its spokesmen tended to put "Popery" and Catholic religious orders in the same class with it, as horrible, secret, oath-bound organizations very dangerous to a free republic. Its newspapers were bitterly anti-Catholic, and at party gatherings the "Man

³⁵ Charles Francis Adams, (ed.), *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams, Comprising Portions of His Diary from 1795 to 1848* (12 vols.: Philadelphia, 1874-1877), IX, 11.

of Sin" was likely to come in for a terrible drubbing. Hostility to foreign immigrants was also expressed, as for instance by the Massachusetts state convention of 1834, which passed a resolution demanding restrictions upon naturalization.³⁶ "Such a spirit led naturally to the Native American doctrines of the future; indeed, many of the prominent Anti-Masons became leaders of that excitement."³⁷

More ominous for the moment was the fact that the increasing racial and religious prejudice was already expressing itself in acts of violence.

The first serious anti-Irish riot in Boston occurred on the evening of June 19, 1823, when, in consequence of a scuffle during the day, a large body of natives attacked the Irish and their homes in Ann Street, smashing windows and committing other excesses, and desisting only when the Mayor and Sheriff arrived to restore order.³⁸

Three years later there took place a much more formidable affray, which may be called the first Broad Street riot. The trouble started again with a daytime quarrel between some Yankee cooper's apprentices and some Irish laborers. That evening (July 11, 1826) and the following one, native mobs assailed the heart of the Irish district, Broad Street. In spite of warnings from the residents that a still worse outbreak was being planned, the city authorities took no effective measures to afford protection. On the third night, therefore (Thursday, July 13th), a much larger horde raged through Broad Street, pelting the windows with stones and brickbats, yelling insults, and daring the Irish to come out and fight. Some few of the latter may have accepted the challenge, but the large majority, displaying a self-restraint which, as *The Jesuit* later asserted, "no equal body of men possessing the same courage would have

³⁶ *Antimasonic Republican Convention for Massachusetts, Held at Boston, September 10 and 11, 1834* (Boston, 1834), p. 19.

³⁷ Charles McCarthy, "The Antimasonic Party: a Study of Antimasonry in the United States, 1827-1840," *Am. Hist. Assoc., Report for the Year 1902*, I (Washington, 1903), 544.

³⁸ *Columbian Centinel*, June 21, 1823; *Boston Patriot and Daily Mercantile Advertiser*, June 23.

shown under similar circumstances," preferred to commit themselves solely to the protection of the law. The Sheriff and the City Marshal eventually appeared, the Riot Act was read, the crowd was ordered and begged to disperse — but all to little avail. The dense and howling throng, resisting all efforts of the officers to seize their leaders, marched through the adjacent Irish section — Pond, Merrimac, Ann Streets — repeating their excesses and depredations. It was only after three hours of rioting, and when the mob had begun to disperse through weariness and thirst for grog, that the constables were able to restore order and to make a few arrests.

With a charming appearance of impartiality, four Irishmen were presently brought to trial for rioting on July 11th and four Yankees for rioting on July 13th. Two of the Irishmen were convicted, receiving fines of twenty dollars each. All four of the Yankees were convicted, and they were sentenced respectively to twelve, nine, six, and two months in jail.³⁹

In January, 1828, South Boston was the scene of a two-days' battle between hosts described as consisting of "Irish and English Protestants" on the one side and Irish Catholics on the other. Many were bruised, some were wounded, but "no one was killed."⁴⁰ In October, 1832, some natives made "a most determined attack" on the Irish in Merrimac Street, Boston, three of the latter being beaten and severely injured.⁴¹

Outside of Boston scenes were enacted similar to the foregoing or even worse. At Lowell, on the evening of May 17, 1831, several hundred Yankees attempted to storm the Irish settlement on "the Acre," hoping also, it is said, to destroy the new Catholic church then nearly completed. A furious battle took place along the line of the Suffolk Canal, the Irish — men, women, and children — defending their homes and their church

³⁹ On this affair, which has almost entirely escaped the attention of Catholic historians, see *Evening Gazette and General Advertiser*, July 15 and Aug. 12, 1826; *Daily Advertiser*, July 18; *Salem Gazette*, July 18; *The Jesuit*, Jan. 16, 1830; *Boston Municipal Court Records*, in the office of the Clerk of the Superior Criminal Court; and various pertinent papers in the Boston City Archives.

⁴⁰ *Daily Advertiser*, Jan. 29, 1828; *New England Palladium*, Jan. 29; Feb. 22; *Boston Recorder*, Feb. 1, 22; *Boston Municipal Court Records*.

⁴¹ *Evening Gazette and General Advertiser*, Oct. 20, 1832.

with great courage and, finally, with complete success. It is pleasant to record that the large majority of the Lowell people strongly condemned this ignoble assault.⁴²

If the rivalry of native laborers with the Irish for jobs had much to do with this outbreak, it was even more clearly a prime factor in the riots in Bangor in the autumn of 1833. At that time a mob of lower-class people for several nights attacked, burned, or otherwise destroyed the homes of the Irish and scoured the streets to beat up every Irishman they could find. Here, too, the better elements in the community declared against the hooligans; and hastily organized patrols, on horse and foot, eventually restored order.⁴³

Other less drastic or more cowardly forms of anti-Catholic action were not lacking. In 1831 and 1832 attempts were made to burn the new church at Dover, New Hampshire.⁴⁴ In 1834 the just dedicated Catholic church at New Haven, Connecticut, was robbed of its crucifixes and chalice by bigots or plain thieves.⁴⁵ A placard posted up in the streets of Hartford in 1831 expressed very well the effect which the Evangelical crusade was having upon the popular mind. It ran:

TO THE PUBLIC

Be it known unto you far and near that all Catholics
and all persons in favor of the Catholic religion are a set
of vile imposters, liars, villians, and cowardly cut-throats.
(Beware of false doctrine).

I bid defiance to that villian the Pope.

A True American.⁴⁶

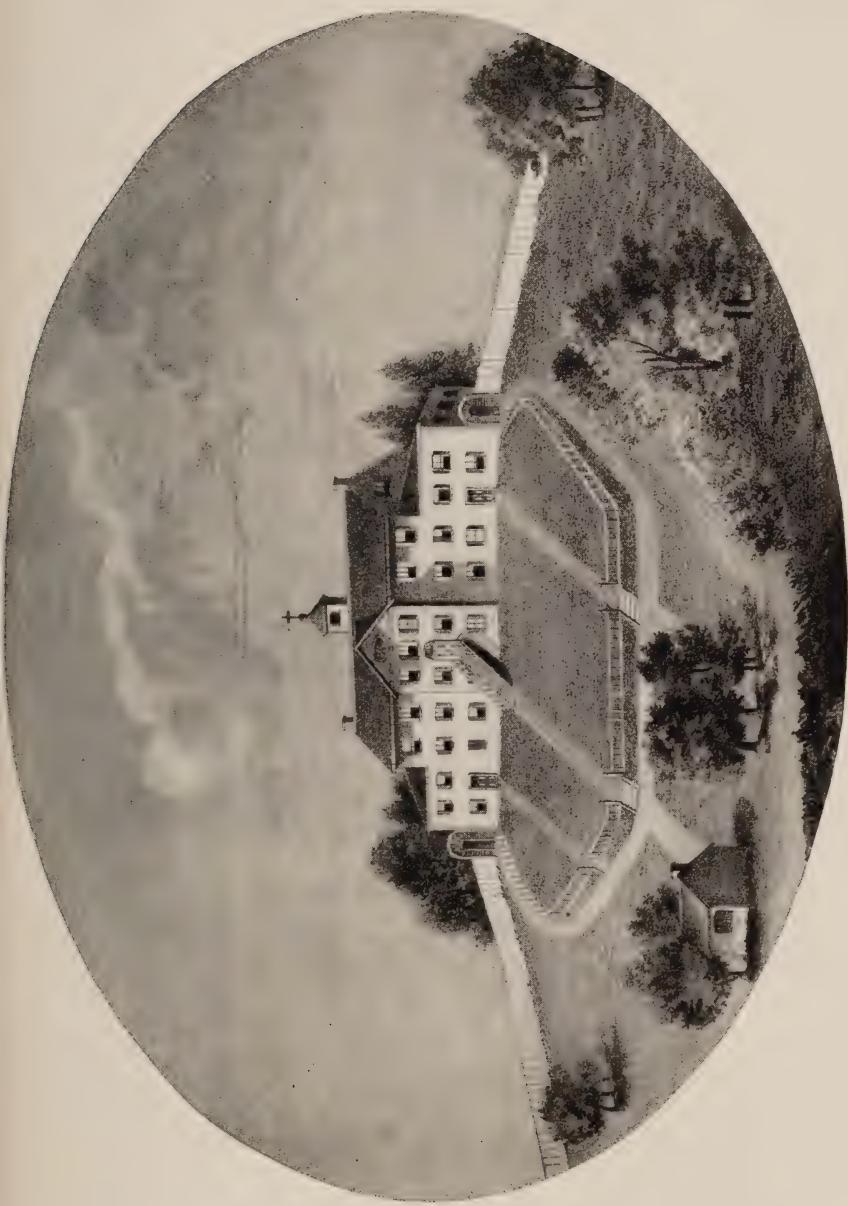
⁴² *Boston Patriot*, May 21, 24, 27, 1831; George F. O'Dwyer, *The Irish Catholic Genesis of Lowell*, pp. 15-17.

⁴³ *History of Penobscot County*, p. 666; Charles P. Roberts, *Bangor's City Semi-Centennial* (Bangor, 1885), p. 4; Mrs. Mary H. Curran, *The Anti-Catholic Riots of 1833* (Ms., Bangor Hist. Soc. Library).

⁴⁴ *The Catholic Church in New England*, I, 637.

⁴⁵ *Boston American Traveller*, Oct. 28, 1834.

⁴⁶ *Catholic Press*, Jan. 22, 1831.



THE CHARLESTOWN CONVENT IN 1828

CHAPTER VIII

THE BURNING OF THE CHARLESTOWN CONVENT

I

By 1834, anti-Catholic bigotry and fanaticism had been fired to the point where they produced an explosion which has lingered in the tradition of this region as the most disgraceful outrage ever perpetrated in New England and the most tragic event in the history of the Church here.

The Ursuline establishment on Mount Benedict had never seemed more peaceful, flourishing, and beautiful than in the summer of that year, on the eve of the catastrophe. Forty-four pupils were then in residence, just at the close of the vacation period. While most of them were drawn from the first Protestant families of Boston and vicinity, five came from points as remote as Savannah, New Orleans, and Puerto Rico. The Ursuline community numbered ten members: the Mother Superior, five choir Sisters, two lay Sisters, and two novices.

The Superior, known in religion as Mary Edmond St. George, was born in Montreal in 1793, of a Protestant family named Moffatt. Converted to the Catholic faith at the age of seventeen, she had entered the Ursuline Monastery at Quebec in 1811, whence in 1824 she had been loaned to Boston, at the urgent request of the Administrator, Father Taylor, to become the second head of the community. During ten years in this position she had shown unusual executive ability, and to her, next only to Bishop Fenwick, belonged the credit for the remarkable success of the school. She is described as of medium height and very stout, but with a quick step, vivacious air, and a regal dignity that never deserted her. A little hot-tempered and sharp of tongue she may have been, and somewhat too unbending and tactless in dealing with mobs. But it is impossible not to admire the courage and spirit of that intrepid soul. One

likes to remember her on that night while the convent burned and pursuers were threatening her life, gathering her terrified flock in a farmhouse, settling down on the one sofa, and calmly remarking that if she only had a clean handkerchief and a pinch of snuff, she would be perfectly happy.

Notable among the other nuns were Sister Mary Benedict (a daughter of the Rev. Virgil Barber), whose beauty, charm, and brilliant mind fascinated all visitors to the convent; and Sister Mary John (Elizabeth Harrison, of Philadelphia), an accomplished teacher and an excellent religious, who was, however, subject, particularly at times of overwork, to attacks of some mental disorder, during which she might say or do strange things. Half the members of the community were native Americans, and half were converts.¹

Charlestown was at that time a town of about ten thousand people. The peninsular part was fairly thickly settled, but the westerly portion "outside the neck" (now Somerville) was in the main still given over to farms. Catholicism had but recently been breaking into this previously untainted Yankee community. The coming of the Ursulines in 1826, the building of St. Mary's Church in 1828, and the establishment of a Catholic cemetery on Bunker Hill in 1830 marked the rapid progress of the invaders. Charlestown, always a stronghold of orthodox Protestantism, was disposed to resent and resist this incursion. Broils between native Americans and Irish were

¹ The other members of the Community were:

Choir Sisters:

Mary Ursula (Sarah Chase, of Cornish, N.H.), a sister of the excellent Captain Bela Chase, and one of the group of Claremont converts;

Mary Joseph (Ellen O'Keefe), a native of Cork;

Mary Austin (Frances O'Keefe), her sister.

Lay Sisters:

Mary Claire (Rebecca De Costa), a Bostonian, a convert of Father Matignon's, and aunt of the convert-minister, Rev. Benjamin F. De Costa;

Mary Ambrose (Elizabeth Bennett), likewise a Bostonian and a convert.

Novices:

Mary Henry (Catherine Quirk), whose mother was of that Ryan family of Limerick which had befriended Father Thayer in his last years and which had furnished the first candidates for the Boston convent;

Mary Bernard (Grace O'Boyle), a native of Ireland.

frequent. In 1831 the town meeting and the selectmen started a campaign to prevent the Catholics from using their new cemetery. Bishop Fenwick carried the matter into court, and his long-drawn-out battle with the selectmen ended with his victory before the highest tribunal of Massachusetts only in October, 1834. Another illustration of the state of feeling is furnished by a hitherto almost unnoticed episode which took place late in 1833. A party of natives having pursued and insulted a group of Irishmen coming from a Thanksgiving dance at Roger McGowan's restaurant, a fight ensued in which one of the natives was killed. The next day word was passed around to raise a mob and destroy McGowan's house by way of reprisals. That evening the riffraff of Charlestown, with reinforcements from Boston and with the aid of the firemen, attacked the place, drove out its inmates, destroyed their belongings, and finally pulled the house down. The selectmen, some hours before the expected attack, had taken McGowan's arms away from him and then did virtually nothing to protect him from the mob. Twenty-six of the rioters were indicted; they were defended by the same lawyers who later defended the convent-burners; and all were triumphantly acquitted except three, whose punishment was ridiculously light. The whole affair seems like a dress rehearsal for the destruction of Mount Benedict.²

If the Charlestown populace in general was seething with hostility, the immediate neighbors of the convent were by no means friendly. Even the most respectable of them, Edward Cutter, a brickmaker, and John Runey, one of the selectmen, were full of suspicions and dislike of convents. Still worse was Alvah Kelley, a brickmaker residing just east of Mount Benedict. He was the perfect type of small-town bigot, hating the Catholics and the Irish, spreading the vilest stories about "nunneries," accustomed to say that such institutions "ought not to be allowed in a free country" and "ought to come

² *Bunker Hill Aurora*, Nov. 30, 1833, to Jan. 18, 1834; *Commonwealth vs. Wm. Morse et al.*, 1833, Dec. term, Court of Common Pleas (*Records in the Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court, Middlesex County*).

down." Worst of all were the numerous laborers employed in the several brickyards of the neighborhood. Largely recruited from New Hampshire, a region then notorious for anti-Catholic prejudice, these workingmen had long displayed an attitude towards the convent that was hostile, insulting, and menacing.

Besides this unpleasant environment, the Ursulines had from the first to face a campaign of insinuation, denunciation, and slander from the Evangelical pulpit and press. To the inflamed Protestant imagination of that time convents were immoral and corrupt institutions in which, under a veil of secrecy and hypocritical pretenses, the worst vices and crimes were practiced. Moreover, the marked success of the Ursulines, as of convent-schools elsewhere, in winning the patronage of wealthy Protestants aroused anger and alarm among the Evangelicals. Were not such schools the instruments of a vast conspiracy to lure the children of the upper classes into the toils of "Popery" and thus pave the way for the Roman conquest of America? Was not Mount Benedict the symbol and the advance-guard of a counter-revolution intended to destroy all that Bunker Hill stood for? For years the religious journals harped upon this danger. All manner of pressure was applied to deter Protestant parents from sending their children into this "pestiferous atmosphere" and thus doing "a deed over which coming generations will have cause to weep tears of blood."³ But parents seemed to persist in their infatuation, and almost on the eve of the destruction of Mount Benedict the *Recorder* was bewailing that "not until we see the blood of our sons and daughters flowing upon our soil will we believe."⁴

Among the means employed in the public prints and in private gossip to discredit the convent, the most persistent and in the end the most effective was the fable that women were detained there against their will, held under duress. Such stories were circulated even while the Ursulines resided in Boston.⁵ In 1831 a quite untrue tale went the rounds of the Calvinistic press about "the elopement of a pious girl" from

³ *Boston Recorder*, May 5, 1830; June 8, 1831.

⁴ July 26, 1834.

⁵ *Supplement to Six Months in a Convent* (Boston, 1835), p. 172, note.

Mount Benedict, "at the risk of life and limb."⁶ The next year the defamatory campaign received a great impetus from a real elopement — that of the celebrated Rebecca Reed.

This sorry heroine of the No-Popery Crusade was a poor, uneducated, and almost homeless girl, who, seized for a moment with a romantic impulse to become a nun, had professed conversion to the Catholic faith and had succeeded in importuning the reluctant Ursulines into taking her into the convent as a charity pupil for a six-months' period of probation. Becoming discontented after little more than four months, or foreseeing that her probation was bound to end with a decision adverse to her, she decided to leave, and to leave melodramatically. She might have gone openly, for the Sisters would have been delighted: she insisted on running away. She might have left by the open gate: she must needs try to climb a high fence, and fall, and badly hurt herself. After this quite unnecessarily exciting "escape" (January 18, 1832), she resumed the Protestant religion, and began to organize a whispering campaign against the Ursulines, who had been her generous benefactors. It was a new and delightful way of becoming a celebrity to pose as "the humble instrument in the hands of Providence to destroy the institution at Mount Benedict."⁷ From the resources of an exuberant imagination, of a mind that lived in a world of dreams and habitually turned the most commonplace experiences into things marvelous or horrible, she concocted a fund of stories about the cruelties practiced upon the nuns, and she threw out dark insinuations about worse things — nuns held prisoners or mysteriously made away with. Rebecca Reed is a psychological enigma. She may have been morally much superior to her successor in the same rôle at New York, Maria Monk. She may have believed her own wild tales. She may have been the victim of hallucinations or paranoia. At all events, there can be no doubt of her influ-

⁶ *Boston Recorder*, June 8, 1831; *The Jesuit*, July 23, 1831.

⁷ That she used this phrase of herself was asserted by Judge S. P. P. Fay in his letter to the *Boston Courier* of Jan. 2, 1835. She denied it, but I should prefer his testimony to hers.

ence. She was taken up and patronized by various ministers and their flocks. She circulated widely around Boston, Charlestown, and Cambridge, spreading her charges and giving delightful histrionic imitations of scenes from life in a convent. For two years she was the indefatigable, authoritative, and adulated purveyor of slanders against Mount Benedict. After its destruction the Boston Investigating Committee traced most of the discreditable stories about it back to her.

II

The immediate occasion of the tragedy, however, was still another "elopement" from the convent, that of Sister Mary John. That good nun, in another of her occasionally recurring fits of mental derangement, brought on by overwork, slipped out on the afternoon of July 28, 1834, and ran across the street to the house of Edward Cutter. There she asked to be taken to West Cambridge (now Arlington), to the house of a Mr. Cotting, whose daughters had been pupils at Mount Benedict. It was quickly arranged that John Runey should drive her thither, but first the assembled Cutter and Runey clans must entertain the lady at tea, and, evidently, pump her for all the information they could get out of her. On the drive to Arlington the Runey's continued the pumping process. The gist of what they later claimed to have learned was that "Miss Harrison," who, they were sure, was perfectly in her right mind, had fled from the convent because she was unhappy there; "she had good and sufficient reasons for being dissatisfied, some of which she should never disclose"; and she was determined never to return to the place.⁸ Leaving her at Mrs. Cotting's, Runey returned to report what had happened to the sadly worried Mother Superior.

The latter at once sent for Bishop Fenwick, who was naturally alarmed, foreseeing all the misinterpretations and clamors that might grow out of this affair. Late that night he hurried out to Arlington. Sister Mary John refused to see him. Return-

⁸ *Supplement to Six Months in a Convent*, pp. 73 ff.

ing to his lodge at the convent, he "walked the room till day-break."⁹

The next morning, at his request, the runaway's brother, Thomas Harrison, went out to remonstrate with her. He, too, had no success except that she did at length agree to receive the Bishop. That afternoon, therefore, Bishop Fenwick came again, and after long arguments prevailed upon her to return with him to the convent. The nuns received her with rapturous joy. Next day her reason returned, and henceforth she could not sufficiently deplore what she had said and done during her delirious escapade and could scarcely believe what the Sisters told her about it.¹⁰ Such is Bishop Fenwick's own account, confirmed by abundant evidence.

But meanwhile another account was getting into circulation, which, however inexact, was to have vast consequences. On the afternoon of July 29th, while Mary John was still at Mrs. Cotting's, Mrs. Runey had called — presumably to collect more gossip, and she was there when the Bishop came. According to a tale that almost certainly emanated from Mrs. Runey, Mary John had agreed to return to the convent only to check scandal arising from her precipitate flight; after two or three weeks she was to be free to depart; and it was then her full intention to take advantage of that permission. Above all, she was said to have made a pressing request to Mrs. Runey that if at the end of two or three weeks she had not been allowed to leave, her friends should "make a stir about it"; "it was her desire that some measures might be devised for ascertaining what her condition might be."¹¹ How much of this the delirious nun may have said, how much of it rested upon exaggerations or misunderstandings, it is hard to guess.

At any rate, the Runeys and the Cutters now had a sacred duty to perform. To them "Miss Harrison" was a sympathetic girl, who, in the full exercise of her reason, had very sensibly and commendably decided to run away from the servitude and

⁹ *Memoranda*, July 28, 1834.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, July 29—Aug. 3.

¹¹ Runey's statement in the *Bunker Hill Aurora*, Nov. 1, 1834; *Supplement to Six Months in a Convent*, pp. 88 f.

perhaps the cruelties of the convent. She had been lured back temporarily under specious promises. It was all too likely that those promises would not be kept; that Miss Harrison would be forcibly detained — and Heaven alone knew what might not befall her! The Protestant neighbors must keep vigilant watch over this affair, and must assure the imperiled liberty of this poor girl at all costs.

The very next day, therefore, Wednesday, the 30th, Mr. and Mrs. Runey and the two Misses Cutter called at the convent and asked to see their friend. The Superior replied that Sister Mary John, having had a bad mental breakdown, was under the doctor's care and could not receive visitors. Indignant, Runey flew to the Bishop, who happened to be there that day, but from him, too, no permission to see the nun could be obtained. That was sufficient! All one's worst suspicions were justified! Miss Harrison was evidently a prisoner, and her "insanity" was just a pretext for detaining her and cutting her off from her friends.

It is evident that from the day of Mary John's flight, the Runeys and the Cutters had been scattering her story all around the neighborhood. Now — without making any further efforts to see her — they redoubled their exertions, eager to share their inflamed suspicions and haunting anxieties with all the world. From them the tale of the prisoner of Mount Benedict, in ever more distorted and exaggerated forms, spread like wildfire around the community.

Already before the end of that first week the brick-yard crowd were holding meetings, it is said, at the neighborhood school-house and threatening to burn down the convent. At the second meeting, Alvah Kelley is reported to have persuaded them to wait three weeks, and then, if Miss Harrison was still detained, to liberate her by force. He was to give notice if anything was to be done earlier.¹²

On Monday, August 4th, at the monthly meeting of the

¹² This rests on the testimony given at the trial of the convent-burners by one of them, Henry Buck, who had turned State's evidence. Although the defense strongly impugned Buck's character, they did not refute his evidence.

selectmen, Runey laid the affair before his colleagues, stating his fears that unless something were done to satisfy the public mind, serious consequences might follow. The Board voted "that John Runey and Samuel Poor be a Committee to take legal advice in relation to the confinement of a certain Female in the Nunery in this Town, and report to the Board."¹³

That same day Poor and Runey consulted Joseph Tufts, one of the best lawyers in Charlestown, as to the means of liberating the supposed captive. His advice to them, however, was that they had better wait until the three weeks were up, and then they might get a writ of habeas corpus for her if necessary.¹⁴ For one week more, then, the selectmen waited, while the excitement grew and spread to all the neighboring towns. By Thursday the Lady Superior was already warned of the danger that the convent would be destroyed.

The next day, August 8th, the affair burst forth in the newspapers. On the authority of a roving reporter in Charlestown, and without any attempt to verify the truth of the story, the *Boston Mercantile Journal* published the following notice:

Mysterious. — We understand that a great excitement at present exists in Charlestown, in consequence of the mysterious disappearance of a young lady at the Nunnery in that place. The circumstances, as far as we can learn, are as follows:

The young lady was sent to the place in question to complete her education, and became so pleased with the place, and its inmates, that she was induced to seclude herself from the world, and take the black veil. After some time spent in the Nunnery, she became dissatisfied, and made her escape from the institution; but was afterwards persuaded to return, being told that if she would continue three weeks longer, she would be dismissed with honor. At the end of that time, a few days since, her friends called for her, but she was not to be found, and much alarm is excited in consequence.

This article, so loaded with falsehoods and with dynamite, went the rounds of the newspapers the next day (Saturday), with some additional embellishments.

¹³ *Town Records of Charlestown*, vol. XII (ms.), *Boston City Archives*.

¹⁴ *Supplement to Six Months in a Convent*, pp. 108-111; *Bunker Hill Aurora*, Aug. 16, Nov. 1, 1834.

On Sunday morning several kinds of placards were found posted up in Charlestown and Boston. One of them read:

To the Selectmen of Charlestown!! Gentlemen: It is currently reported that a mysterious affair has lately happened at the Nunery in Charlestown, now it is your duty gentlemen to have this affair investigated immediately, if not the Truckmen of Boston will demolish the Nunery thursday night — August 14.

Another more spirited one ran:

Go ahead!! To arms!! To arms!! Ye brave and free, the Avenging Sword unshield!! Leave not one stone upon another of this curst nunnery that prostitutes female virtue and liberty under the garb of holy Religion. When Bonaparte opened the Nunneries of Europe, he found crowds of Infant skulls!!!!

By this time a vigorous public statement was clearly needed to refute dangerous rumors and avert a catastrophe. Three efforts were made, but a strange fatality rendered them all ineffectual.

On Saturday evening (August 9th) the *Boston Transcript* declared itself authorized by Bishop Fenwick to state that "the whole story upon which the excitement was founded was untrue," and that the excitement "had been occasioned by the language of a Sister of the convent, who was an invalid, and had been sometimes deprived of reason by a brain fever." A complete exposition of the facts from the Bishop was promised for Monday, but, unfortunately, on that date it did not appear. Dr. Fenwick had meantime learned that Edward Cutter was preparing a public statement, and concluded that one emanating from a respected Protestant would carry more weight than one from himself.

Cutter's intervention originated in a visit which he paid to the convent on the evening of August 9th. While we have rather conflicting reports of what happened that night, it seems likely that he and his brother, Fitch Cutter, found an angry crowd at the convent gate and, fearing violence, resolved to go

in and seek assurances that would pacify the mob. Their conversation with the excited Superior was, at first, rather stormy. It was then that she seems to have used the later so often quoted phrase, that if the convent were attacked, the Bishop had twenty thousand Irishmen at his command and there would be retaliation. Presently, however, Mary John was brought in and she assured the visitors that she was well and happy, and that if she remained in the convent, it was purely by her own choice. Edward Cutter was completely satisfied. Anxious, probably, both to avert a riot and to make amends for all his charges and violent language against the convent in the past two weeks, he now offered, not only to go out and disperse the crowd at the gates, but also to prepare an article for the newspapers to allay the excitement.

On Sunday morning he drafted his statement, which, had it been published in time, might still, perhaps, have saved the situation. But for some reason he did not take it into Boston until evening; he appears to have tried only one newspaper, the *Morning Post*; and at that office he was told that the next day's issue was already made up and that his article could not be printed until Tuesday. It appeared, therefore, the morning after the convent was burned.

The third last-minute effort to clear up the situation was made by the selectmen of Charlestown. Reminded by the placards of that morning that the public expected an immediate investigation from them, on Sunday afternoon Poor, as their spokesman, called at the convent and, after having been most amicably received by Mary John, arranged with the Superior that next day the whole board of selectmen should visit and inspect the place.

From three to six, therefore, on Monday, August 11th, the selectmen, accompanied by Edward and Fitch Cutter, made a most conscientious inspection. They questioned "Miss Harrison" to their hearts' content. They were escorted by her over the whole establishment. They searched the main building from basement to attic, looking into every drawer and closet, and even into the children's paint boxes. They examined the cellar,

for Alvah Kelley had affirmed that there were infants buried there. They inspected the mausoleum in the garden where the smiling nun who accompanied them was said to be interred. Their last doubt completely dispelled, they went home and drafted a public statement which should have annihilated the current slanders about the convent. But it could appear in the papers only on Tuesday morning, and even while they were writing it, the long gathering storm was about to break.

III

For many days it had been common talk in Boston and the surrounding towns that the convent was to be "pulled down" or burned. For some reason, however, the tale had been circulated that the attack was to take place Thursday night (August 14th). This story may have been put forth as a ruse to prevent any measures from being taken to protect the place on Monday night, when the attack was actually delivered. It may be that the affair, originally scheduled for Thursday, was transferred to Monday as soon as its instigators learned of the forthcoming statements from Cutter and the selectmen, which might ruin their plans. Or there may have been two independent plots: one for Monday and one for Thursday night.

At all events, on Monday evening (August 11th), between eight and nine o'clock, groups began to gather in the Winter Hill Road by the main gateway of the convent. Conspicuous among them was a towering young giant from the Granite State, one John R. Buzzell, a brickmaker who worked for, and boarded at the house of, Alvah Kelley. After firing his courage with molasses and gin at Ford's bar, this locally famous fighting man rushed up breathing fire and flames against the Irish and offering to be the first to break in the convent door. Several well-informed persons — Judge Fay, of Cambridge, with his friend Levi Thaxter, of Watertown, both of whom had daughters in the convent; John Runey (just back from taking the selectmen's statement to Boston); and Edward Cutter — came by and tried to persuade the growing crowd that there

was no real foundation for the stories that excited them and that the true facts would appear in the papers next day. The crowd sometimes seemed to break up, but quickly gathered again, their numbers being constantly swelled by new arrivals coming up on foot or in wagons.

Somewhere around nine-thirty the slumbering inmates of Mount Benedict were suddenly aroused by loud shouts from the road below: "Down with the convent! Down with the convent!" The Superior gathered the nuns and ordered the children, when dressed, to go to the rear of the building. Meanwhile, thirty or forty dark figures came rushing up the driveway, with menacing and insulting cries. From an upper window the dauntless Madam St. George faced them and inquired what they wanted. They demanded to see "the nun who had run away." The Superior tried to bring her, but Sister Mary John had most inopportunately fainted and could not be produced. Further parleys followed, with indignant and somewhat tactless remonstrances from one side and insults from the other. At length, the rioters retired to consult with their friends in the road.

Soon after a second party came up and much the same scene was reenacted. When this group, too, withdrew without having proceeded to violence, though some of them shouted threats about "Thursday night," the Sisters fancied for a brief period that the immediate danger was over.

In reality, it would seem, both these parties had come up in order to reconnoitre and, in particular, to find out whether any preparations had been made for the defense of the convent. They had to reckon with the possibility that the few men-servants of the institution might be on hand and armed, or that the Superior might have brought in for the occasion some of the "twenty thousand Irishmen" of whom she had warned Cutter on Saturday night. Realizing their fears on this score, she had deftly parried questions on the subject, or had said that they had legions of protectors (meaning the hosts of Heaven). Unhappily, however, one of the novices (Mary Bernard) had also parleyed with the second party of rioters, and

to the question whether there were any men in the house had replied that there were within only helpless women and terrified children, with no one to protect them. "That's all we wanted to know," shouted one of the crowd: "now go ahead."

Immediately after their return to the road, therefore, the mob held a "ring" or "caucus" — a sort of "infernal town meeting," as Attorney-General Austin later described it. As had been the case throughout the earlier part of the evening, some — presumably the uninitiated — were for postponing the assault till Thursday. But others, who may be supposed to have been the stage managers during the preliminary part of that night's proceedings, insisted on immediate action. And the decision of the meeting was "do it now!"

The next step was to fetch tar barrels from somewhere in the neighborhood, and with them and with the broken convent fences to set off, on Alvah Kelley's land, a huge bonfire that could be seen for miles around. It was now about eleven o'clock. This bonfire was undoubtedly the preconcerted signal for calling out promised assistance. The neighboring church bells at once began to ring (the usual fire signal). The fire engines of Charlestown and Boston came rushing to the scene. Within a short time a crowd of several thousand people had gathered.

Meanwhile, soon after the bonfire was lighted, a band of fifty or sixty of "the brave and free" appeared mysteriously from somewhere, many of them disguised, and some of them having their faces painted like Indians.¹⁵ Evidently the chief actors had now entered upon the stage, those who were to do the dangerous work in the sacking and burning of the convent. But these heroes did not dare proceed to action until the auxiliary forces had come up; and of these auxiliaries it seems almost certain that those most relied upon were the firemen.

The unpaid "engine companies" of those days were, in gen-

¹⁵ This fact, so important in establishing the premeditated and highly organized character of the attack on the convent, was related in nearly all the newspaper accounts of the tragedy and was frequently alluded to in the ensuing trials.

eral, an undisciplined, turbulent, and frequently riotous set of men; and even worse were the "volunteers" (often minors) and "friends," who accompanied them to fires and joined in the convivial life of the engine houses. The firemen were also notorious for their hostility to the Irish. In spite of later official whitewashings, it seems almost certain that both the Boston and the Charlestown companies took a large share in that night's events. The Charlestown engines, upon reaching the scene, halted opposite Alvah Kelley's house; their officers and men did absolutely nothing to interfere with the ensuing burning of the convent; and in all probability many of them actively assisted in that work. The Boston companies conducted themselves in much the same fashion; and one of them, No. 13, from the West End, drew particular attention to itself by its equivocal performance.

This large company ¹⁶ went out to Charlestown accompanied by numerous "volunteers," some of whom were to take outstanding parts in the crimes that followed. As someone along the way tried to stop them by explaining that the conflagration was only a bonfire, one of the Boston torchbearers shouted back: "This ain't a-going to end with a bonfire." When they reached the scene, unlike the other companies they went straight ahead to the convent gate; and there smutted-faced conspirators and others seized hold of the rope and pulled the engine up the hill, while the crowd cheered and shouted, "Down with the nunnery! Go ahead, hook and ladder!" It was under the cover and protection of this Boston engine (which any concealed defenders of the nuns would have hesitated to fire upon) that the mob for the first time swarmed up to the convent *en masse*, and the chosen band of fifty — "the party," as it was often called that night — emerged from the shrubbery and other hiding-places to begin their grim task. "Off badges, and go to work," someone sang out to No. 13's men, and the voice was later proved to have been that of Prescott P. Pond, a brother-in-law of Rebecca Reed, and a volunteer of the company. Immediately stones and brickbats began

¹⁶ On August 11, 1834, it had sixty-three members enrolled.

to fly through the windows of the convent. The attack was on. It is true that Captain Quinn, who seems to have been an honest man, succeeded in having his engine brought back to the road not long afterwards and he attempted to prevent his men from taking any further part in the riot. But it is doubtful how far he was able to restrain even the regular members of the company and quite certain that he had no control over the volunteers.

The assault on the convent was, apparently, launched a little after 11:30 P.M. Soon a door was battered in, and the rioters burst into the building. The nuns and their pupils had barely time to escape to the garden in the rear, where a high board fence barred their further flight. With torches brought, or at least with fire obtained, from Engine No. 13, "the party" ranged through the building, accompanied by various sympathizers or even curious persons who stole in under cover of darkness, while outside several hundred of their friends formed a covering force to ward off any possible interference. The rioters, after first assuring themselves that the inmates had all departed — the one thing that can be said to their credit — ransacked the house from top to bottom, smashing or ruining whatever they did not care to steal. Next combustible materials were piled in the middle of the rooms. Amid cheers and jeers the Bible, the ornaments of the altar, the cross were tossed upon the pyre. And then, sometime around half-past twelve, the fire was started, and the beautiful convent — the first-fruits of Catholic educational enterprise in New England — went up in a roar of flames.

The Bishop's lodge was next looted and burned, and the fine library which it contained, after a mock auction, conducted by a boy named Marvin Marcy, was wantonly destroyed.

The mausoleum in the garden was broken into, out of morbid curiosity produced by the sinister stories then current. Coffins were actually opened, and the mouldering remains of the dead exposed.

Particularly outrageous to Catholic feeling was the desecration of the Blessed Sacrament. Two brave nuns had striven

desperately to protect It. As the key could not be found in the confusion, they had wrenched the mahogany tabernacle from the altar, just as the rioters were bursting into the chapel; and one of these Sisters (Mary Bernard) had then carried her precious burden into the grounds and hid it amid tall vines in a remote spot, where she hoped it would not be found. Nevertheless, the rioters did discover it. The tabernacle was wrenched open, the ciborium smashed, and the consecrated Hosts were strewn about the fields or carried away as sacrilegious trophies.

After completing their work by burning the last remaining buildings on the premises — the barn, the stables, the icehouse, the farmhouse — about daybreak the triumphant mob dispersed.

During most of this long carnival of lawlessness an enormous crowd of spectators, drawn from all the neighboring towns, had looked on without a single serious attempt at opposition, or — as far as is known — without a single voice being raised in protest. Even more disgraceful was the supine attitude of the Charlestown authorities. They took no precautions in advance, although the imminence of an attack on the convent had been for days a matter of common talk. They made no attempt to read the Riot Act, to bring out the militia, or to get marines from the Navy Yard. Not one constable, even, was in evidence. Three of the selectmen — Hooper, the chairman of the board, Runey, and Goodridge — did put in a belated appearance at the riot, but they ventured to make only the feeblest remonstrances and then went home to bed. They were later to defend themselves with such pleas as that if they had called out the militia, the rioters would have run away, and then it would have been impossible to detect any of the criminals.¹⁷ This has been called the most whimsical apology ever put forward by public officials.

It remains to speak of the escape of the Sisters. While the sacking of the convent was still going on, Edward Cutter and some brave friends appeared on the other side of that formidable fence. They lifted the children over, and broke a hole through which the nuns could climb. Cutter generously offered

¹⁷ Their statement in the *Bunker Hill Aurora*, Aug. 23, 1834.

his own house to them as an asylum, but the Superior preferred to lead her weary flock to some safer place, farther from the scene of the riot. Dragging along the half-inanimate Mary John and the novice Mary Henry — already in the later stages of consumption — they plodded on, in mortal terror of pursuers, until they found a refuge in the house of two kind Protestants, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Adams, half a mile west of Mount Benedict, at Winter Hill. Not long after arriving, they were called to an upper room to take a last look at their convent, now enveloped in flames; and then they fell on their knees and said the psalm, *Laudate Dominum, omnes gentes*. In the morning carriages sent by Bishop Fenwick brought the Ursulines to Boston, while their pupils repaired to their homes.

IV

The events of that fearful night, when noised about next day, stirred the community to the depths. Not only Catholics but all fair-minded and law-loving Protestants were filled with indignation. That religious liberty, personal security, the rights of property, and respect for law and order could have been trampled upon in this manner in the very birthplace of American freedom; that a mob of ruffians could have carried out this cowardly attack upon defenseless women and children and destroyed a splendid educational institution in the presence of countless applauding or passive spectators, and within sight of Boston State House and Bunker Hill — all this seemed to right-minded people an almost incredible outrage and an unparalleled disgrace to the community. The Unitarian upper classes of Boston had, perhaps, a special reason for alarm; their faith was then being assailed by the Evangelicals almost as fiercely as was Catholicism. If this sort of thing continued, they might be the victims of the next riot. And all order-loving people were at once seized with the fear that the victorious mob would try to continue its exploits by burning the Catholic churches; that the Catholics might attempt drastic retaliation; that Boston might be plunged into the horrors of a religious and racial war.

The better elements in the community at once bestirred themselves, therefore, both to redress as far as possible the wrong that had been done and to avert new outbreaks of violence. At a great public meeting in Faneuil Hall, Boston, on Tuesday and at similar gatherings in Charlestown (August 12th) and Cambridge (August 13th), the leading citizens of those towns expressed their condemnation of the outrage in the most vigorous language. As a result of the Faneuil Hall meeting, Mayor Lyman appointed a large committee of investigation, which, after a thorough inquiry into the facts in the case, brought forth a report roundly refuting the charges that had been raised against the convent, highly praising the Ursulines, and deploring "this event of fearful import, as well as of the profoundest shame and humiliation," which "has come upon us like the shock of an earthquake."¹⁸

The week following the convent-burning was a period of such excitement and anxiety as the community had not known for fifty years. Night after night hosts of citizens patrolled the streets as volunteer constables; the militia companies were at their armories ready for emergencies; the Mayor of Boston at City Hall and Bishop Fenwick with his clergy at the Cathedral were up until morning; the Ursulines, in their refuge with the Sisters of Charity, trembled at every noise in the streets; and the citizens of Charlestown "scarcely dared to retire to their beds."¹⁹

On Tuesday night the expected mob gathered and paraded through the streets of Boston, threatening to burn the Cathedral and menacing the armories. Thwarted, however, by the strong guards they encountered, they finally marched over to Mount Benedict to celebrate their victory of the previous evening and to spend the night destroying fruit trees, vines, fences, and whatever vandalism had yet spared. That same night rumors that the Irish were coming to burn the Harvard Library or the Divinity School by way of reprisals led forty or

¹⁸ The *Report of the Committee, Relating to the Destruction of the Ursuline Convent, August 11, 1834*, issued by the City Printer September 20, has been republished frequently in collections of documents dealing with this affair.

¹⁹ *Bunker Hill Aurora*, March 21, 1835, referring to this period.

fifty graduates of the college to spend the hours of darkness on guard, with muskets and ball cartridges, against what proved a quite imaginary danger.²⁰

On Wednesday night, although excitement was still as great, the bigot mob of Boston was even less successful than on Tuesday. A new attempt on the Cathedral was baffled, and when they again set out to invade Charlestown, they found the draw in the bridge raised against them. During the rest of the week the agitation gradually died down, and by the 19th tranquillity was completely restored.

Nothing had conduced more to bring the community safely through this trying period than the exemplary self-control maintained by the Catholics under the noble leadership of Bishop Fenwick. On the day after the burning of the convent, hundreds of Irish laborers employed on the Lowell, Worcester, and Providence railroads started for Boston, determined to defend their nuns, their churches, and their families against further outrages. The Bishop hastened to send priests to meet them to dissuade them from any act of violence. For the same purpose he gathered his people together at the Cathedral at six o'clock that tense Tuesday evening, and preached to them from the text: *But I say to you, Love your enemies: do good to them that hate you: and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you.* After denouncing the conduct of the incendiaries in appropriate terms, he continued:

What is to be done? Shall we say to our enemies, you have destroyed our buildings, and we will destroy yours? No, my brethren, this is not the religion of Jesus Christ — this is not in accordance with the spirit of that blessed religion we all profess. Turn not a finger in your own defense, and there are those around you who will see that justice is done you.

Again on the following Sunday he preached at the Cathedral on the text: *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

Thanks to such leadership, the Catholics went through the

²⁰ *Salem Gazette*, Aug. 15, 1834; Robert C. Winthrop, "Reminiscences of a Night Passed in the Library of Harvard College," *Mass. Hist. Soc. Proc.*, XXII (1886-1887), 216 ff.

crisis without committing a single act of retaliation, winning thereby the grateful recognition of the press and the intelligent public. The Unitarian *Christian Examiner* declared:

Our feelings may be regarded as wholly unbiased when we say that under the outrage which has been perpetrated, the Catholics among us have displayed upon Christian principles a degree of forbearance that does them the highest honor. The religion which has suffered and the fanaticism . . . of the guilty stand out in striking contrast to each other. Which sort of spirit is it desirable should prevail? ²¹

V

Bishop Fenwick's faith that justice would be done to the Catholic cause by the courts of the land and by the force of public opinion was doomed to be tragically disappointed. The sequel of the Ursuline affair was to be almost as painful to him and as disgraceful to the community as the convent-burning itself.

The fact was that whatever the upper classes might think, the large majority of the public rejoiced that the convent was gone, even though many might not exactly approve the means by which it had been eliminated. The more ignorant and bigoted classes were openly jubilant over its destruction. And the leaders of the No Popery crusade, after lying low for a few weeks, soon resumed their campaign, determined both to prevent anyone from being punished for the late excesses and to make sure that the hated institution of Mount Benedict should never be restored.

Within a month after the 11th of August the Evangelical journals began to renew their attacks on convents in general and the Ursulines in particular. In late September a new secular newspaper appeared, *The Daily Whig*, whose special mission was to justify as openly as might be done the burning of the convent, and — what was characteristic of the situation — to defend both Miss Rebecca Reed, who had been sternly treated

²¹ Quoted from the *Bunker Hill Aurora*, Sept. 6, 1834.

by the Faneuil Hall investigating committee, and the much accused and abused Boston firemen. Several of the other secular newspapers began to veer to the anti-Catholic side, including, notably, the *Advocate*, the chief organ of the Anti-Masons. Its editor, Benjamin F. Hallett, later a Democratic leader of the most conservative brand, was at that time still a radical reformer, "furious as a windmill in a tornado," among whose chief phobias were "Popery" and convents. The other non-religious journals, fearful of losing their subscribers, more and more lapsed into complete neutrality about the convent-burning. In March, 1835, the anti-Catholic literary campaign reached its climax with the publication of the scurrilous and mendacious book, *Six Months in a Convent*, in which Rebecca Reed purported to relate her experiences among the Ursulines, but which was popularly and very credibly supposed to have been written chiefly by the "Committee of Publication," made up principally of Benjamin Hallett. Madam St. George replied with a vigorous but, perhaps, somewhat too irate *Answer to Six Months in a Convent*. The Committee of Publication retorted with a *Supplement to Six Months in a Convent*, raking up every slander that could be accumulated against the late institution on Mount Benedict; and a wearied public then enjoyed an excellent satire on both sides, entitled *Six Months in a House of Correction, or, the Narrative of Dorah Mahoney, Who Was under the Influence of the Protestants about a Year, and an Inmate of the House of Correction in Leverett Street, Boston, nearly Six Months, in the Year 18—*.

Meanwhile, the attempt to exact justice for the burning of the convent was proceeding very badly. The preliminary investigation had, indeed, been pressed vigorously during the weeks immediately following the crime by the justices of the peace, sitting first at Charlestown and then at East Cambridge, much assisted by evidence uncovered by the Faneuil Hall Committee and a Vigilance Committee appointed in Charlestown. The Attorney-General of the Commonwealth, James T. Austin, one of the ablest and most high-minded lawyers of Massachusetts, threw himself heart and soul into this case, as into no

other during his long and distinguished career. Charges were examined against a score of persons, and the Grand Jury, meeting at Concord on September 8th, indicted twelve men, only seven of whom, however, were actually under arrest. But the intention of the baser elements among the populace to thwart the course of justice was evident from the start. Handbills were posted up (August 21st), threatening that "all persons giving information in any shape or testifying in court against anyone concerned in the late affair at Charlestown may expect assassination, according to the oath which bound the party together."²² The Attorney-General was overwhelmed with menacing letters, and denounced as "a Catholic myrmidon." The officers who made the arrests were burned in effigy. For a week around the end of August the Sheriff of Middlesex County was in constant expectation of an attempt by the mob to storm the jail at East Cambridge and liberate the prisoners; but the arrangements made by him for getting immediate aid from the marines at the Navy Yard, as well as from the Middlesex and Suffolk militia, seem to have checked such projects. At all events, so great were the excitement and the partisanship of the masses that Austin repeatedly pleaded to have the trials postponed or transferred to some distant place, convinced that otherwise there was no chance that justice would be done.

Nevertheless, the trials were begun at East Cambridge December 2, 1834, before the Supreme Judicial Court, Chief Justice Lemuel Shaw presiding, assisted by Justices Putnam and Morton. The counsel for most of the accused were George F. Farley, of Groton, and Samuel H. Mann, of Lowell, two bold and able lawyers famed for their success in defending desperate causes. The charges against the prisoners were arson and burglary, committed under circumstances which, as the State contended, made them capital offenses.

The first and, as it proved, the crucial case was that of John R. Buzzell, the swashbuckling, giant brickmaker, who was identified by very numerous witnesses as having taken a leading part at every stage of the proceedings on the night of the

²² *Bunker Hill Aurora*, Aug. 23, 1834.

11th of August. He himself afterwards admitted that the testimony against him was "sufficient to have convicted twenty men."²³ But fortune was with him, despite all the weight of evidence and all the skill and eloquence of Austin conducting the prosecution. The lawyers for the defense played up to all the prejudices of the jury and the public. The Catholic religion and convents were unscrupulously assailed; the testimony of Catholic witnesses was denounced as utterly worthless because of their religion; the Bishop and the Superior, when called in to testify, were cross-examined — with the tolerance of a too lenient court — as if they were the culprits at the bar and in a way calculated only to stir up Protestant bigotry. The audiences which thronged the daily sessions made no secret of their sympathies. A handbill thrown into the courtroom threatened that the mob would take the law into their own hands unless the prisoners were acquitted;²⁴ and it appears, indeed, that plans had been made to rescue these heroes by force if they were convicted.²⁵ But a complaisant jury, recruited chiefly from the small towns of Middlesex County, rendered such exertions unnecessary. Whether swayed by their own prejudices or by fear of public opinion, after twenty-one hours of deliberation the jurors returned (December 12th) a unanimous verdict of Not Guilty. The courtroom rang with applause. The crowds in the streets received the news with wild huzzas. Buzzell, going forth, was so overwhelmed with acclamations and gifts of money that he issued a card next day to thank a generous public.

The rest of December was given to the trials of William Mason, a fireman, and Sargeant Blaisdell, a brickmaker, both of Charlestown; Isaac Parker, a cordwainer, and Marvin Marcy, a sixteen-year-old youth, both of Cambridge; Alvah Kelley, and Prescott P. Pond, a shoemaker, of Boston. The juries acquitted three of these men, disagreed about Pond and Kelley, and convicted only Marcy, a happy-go-lucky boy who had joined in the

²³ "Destruction of the Charlestown Convent: Statement by the Leader of the Know-Nothing Mob," U.S. Cath. Hist. Soc., *Records and Studies*, XII (1918), 74.

²⁴ *Bunker Hill Aurora*, Dec. 13.

²⁵ U.S. Cath. Hist. Soc., *Records and Studies*, XII, 74.

doings at Mount Benedict simply as a lark. After a long pause the final trials were held at Concord at the beginning of June, the cases considered being those of Pond and Kelley and of two indicted men who had but recently given themselves up: Nathaniel Budd, a baker, and Aaron Hadley, a carpenter, both of Boston. In spite of strong evidence, another partial jury quickly acquitted all four. Next day the mob of Charlestown celebrated this glorious ending of the trials. A tumultuous gathering at the Bunker Hill Tavern, with the American ensign proudly flown above their heads, discharged a salvo of fifty guns, and accompanied each volley with "fiendish yells against Catholics."²⁶

To make the victory complete, it required only to free young Marcy. On February 25th he had received a sentence to hard labor in state's prison for life. That one thoughtless boy should pay such a penalty while all the other convent-burners went scot-free naturally seemed to the public unfair, and scores of petitions for his pardon were promptly sent in from all over the State. Bishop Fenwick's name headed the chief Boston petition, which had about five thousand signatures, including those of many Catholics. As for Mother St. George — a letter which she addressed at this time to the sick youth's doctor, expresses so perfectly the true spirit of the maligned Ursulines that it deserves quoting. She wrote:

... I am deeply pained that anyone should suffer on our account; and it was my intention, from the commencement, to do all in my power to obtain pardon for any of the criminals who might be sentenced to punishment; for I am well convinced that they knew not what they did. Moreover, Marcy was not one of those who concerted the plot; he was young, and joined in the riot for sport, as many other boys would. I beg of you to console him and his afflicted mother, and to say that I will supplicate the Governor for his release. My sisters, as well as myself, would feel miserably, if his sentence were put into execution. . . .

²⁶ *Catholic Sentinel*, June 13, 1835; *Truth Teller*, June 13.

Next day she wrote to Governor Davis on behalf of her community to "entreat" for Marcy's release.²⁷

After considerable official hesitation, in the following October this pardon was granted. Thus, in the end, no one was ever punished for the burning of the convent. Indeed, the triumphant faction were soon carrying their arrogance to the point of virtually proposing that the State should reward the incendiaries. Three months after their acquittal, Pond and Kelley submitted to the Legislature a petition asking financial compensation, ostensibly for the damage suffered by them in their health and business during their imprisonment. A Committee of the House reported favorably, proposing to pay these martyrs five hundred dollars; religious journals applauded; but the majority of the legislators were unwilling to inflict on Massachusetts this supreme ignominy.²⁸

Meanwhile, the real sufferers, the Ursulines, had found it impossible to remain within the Commonwealth. After residing for two months with the Sisters of Charity, they had, in October, 1834, leased the Dearborn mansion in Roxbury, on the site where the Mission Church now stands. Within a week after their removal, Sister St. Henry, whose death from consumption was doubtless much hastened by her sufferings on the 11th of August, passed away serenely, "forgiving and praying for her murderers." ²⁹

Although they attempted to revive their school on a modest scale, the position of the nuns remained highly precarious. They had lost virtually everything they possessed in the tragedy of Mount Benedict, and with no insurance, of course, applicable to such a case. In their new house the rent was high and there was room only for a few boarding pupils. Even day-scholars were hard to get, for parents were now uncertain and nervous. If the Ursulines were to maintain themselves at all, and still more if they were to rebuild their institution at Mount Bene-

²⁷ Letter of Feb. 25, 1835, to Dr. Hooker; of Feb. 26th to Governor Davis (*Mass. State Arch., Pardons, 1835. M. Marcy*).

²⁸ *Mass. State Arch., House Documents, 1836, no. 118. Journal, H. Repr., Oct. 6, 1835; Feb. 3, March 1, 1836.*

²⁹ Letter of Sister Mary Benedict, of Feb. —, 1839, in *The Pilot*, May 7, 1870.

dict on its old scale — as they dreamed of doing — their one hope seemed to lie in obtaining indemnification for their losses from the State Legislature, as the report of the Faneuil Hall Committee had recommended.

Furthermore, it was highly uncertain whether their persecutors would let them alone. Quiet for a time, the bigots and the hooligans resumed their activities as soon as Buzzell's acquittal seemed to prove that in Massachusetts crimes against Catholics could be committed with impunity. Within three days after that verdict, reports began to spread that plans were afoot to pull down or burn the new home of the Ursulines and also to burn the two Catholic churches of Boston. This time Bishop Fenwick did not dare entrust his cause to the protection of the authorities. On Sunday evening, December 21st, he called together his people at the Cathedral and invited them to organize in their own defense. A marshal and a number of captains were appointed, whose business it would be to station bodies of armed Catholics in both churches each night as long as might be necessary. Certain stalwart gentlemen of Roxbury volunteered to guard the Ursulines.³⁰

Next day the excitement grew as it was rumored that the attack on the convent was planned for Tuesday evening and that placards had been posted to that effect. "We live in awful times," the Bishop noted in his journal. But the authorities of Roxbury were not as the selectmen of Charlestown. On Tuesday a special town meeting, hurriedly convoked, took vigorous measures for preserving order and appointed a Vigilance Committee to carry them out.³¹ The strong guard placed over the convent and the patrols in the streets appear to have checked the would-be rioters momentarily, but for some weeks the alarms and the nightly precautions continued. The Bishop's life was threatened in an anonymous communication; and as to the feelings of his sorely provoked people he wrote: "Certainly some lives will be lost in case of another attack, for our good

³⁰ *Memoranda*, Dec. 21, 1834.

³¹ The "Papers of the Roxbury Vigilance Committee, 1834-1835," published in *Mass. Hist. Soc. Proc.*, LIII (1919-1920), 325-331, throw interesting light on this crisis.

Irishmen are now wound up to a point where if you go one step further the chord will snap. They have been horribly insulted in the public prints, which insults they feel most sensibly. All are now armed, and they keep themselves so." ³² By mid-January, however, the crisis seemed to be over, and Bishop Fenwick was henceforth fairly confident that there would be no repetition of the tragedy of Mount Benedict.

When the General Court assembled that month, he presented a petition for indemnification for the Ursulines, taking the ground that they had had a right to expect protection from open outrage and destruction of property, but had not received it. He had little or no hope of success, but he took the step because Catholics expected it and liberal Protestants desired that the Commonwealth should be given one more chance to remove the blot on its escutcheon. The Evangelical and other hostile papers at once burst into furious opposition. In the Legislature a hot struggle developed. On February 25th a select committee of the House of Representatives brought in a divided report. The majority, headed by Kinnicutt, of Worcester, held that the Ursulines ought to receive compensation, not as a matter of legal right, but for other reasons. In the first place, something should be done to restore confidence in the security of life, liberty, and property in Massachusetts. Secondly, it was necessary to prove that the Commonwealth enforced respect for religious freedom. Thirdly, only in this way could something be done to "soften the disgrace which would otherwise rest upon the character of the State." The minority report, presented by the Rev. Joseph Field, of Charlestown, argued that the State was in no way to blame for the Charlestown outrage, but would admit its culpability if it made a donation to the Ursulines. The bulk of the report was a long tirade against Popery: Catholics, it was said, were the tools of a foreign despot; their religion was incompatible with our free institutions; and the Legislature must not, by granting a special favor to Papists, undermine the constitution or government of "this Protestant State."

³² Letter to Rev. George Fenwick, S.J., Dec. 29, 1834 (*Fordham Arch.*).

The decisive debates took place in the House on March 11th and 12th. Most of the speeches were in favor of indemnification, but when the votes were taken, it was found that the opponents of the measure had won by the staggering majority of 412 to 67. In the main, only the representatives of Boston and some other large towns, where there was a Catholic vote to be reckoned with, had voted Yes. The more rural regions, the Evangelical strongholds, had lined up solidly against "Popery." The Great and General Court then proceeded to redeem the reputation of Massachusetts by passing a resolution about the convent-burning in which it declared "its deliberate and indignant condemnation" of this "atrocious infraction of the laws," and — that was all.³³

This disheartening outcome, coupled with the results of the trials, the continuing animosity of so large a part of the press and public, and the financial problem of maintaining a community almost destitute of means of self-support, convinced the Bishop that the Ursulines had best retire, at least for a time, to the hospitable houses of their order in Canada. Madam St. George was vehemently opposed to what she considered an unnecessary and craven surrender of the field of battle. But Bishop Fenwick, having made appropriate arrangements in Canada, insisted, and ultimately he had his way. In May, 1835, the unfortunate Ursulines departed for Quebec. The forces of bigotry had thus won all along the line.

VI

Before leaving the subject of the destruction of the Charlestown convent, some attention should be given to the greatest unsolved question connected with that affair: the question of responsibility.

It may be affirmed with pretty complete certainty that the tragedy of August 11, 1834, was no mere spontaneous explosion of mob violence. It was the result of a conspiracy; it was

³³ *Mass. State Arch., Resolves of 1835*, chapter 68, for all the papers connected with this incident.

something "maturely planned and deliberately executed."³⁴ Such was the view voiced at that time by the whole Catholic press, by eminent Protestant speakers, by the Faneuil Hall Committee, by the two distinguished lawyers for the Commonwealth who prosecuted the rioters.

It was frequently added that the destruction of the convent had been resolved upon for some considerable time and that the "elopement" of Mary John was merely taken as a pretext.³⁵

Those who carried out this plot appear to have been drawn from the poorest and most ignorant strata. They were brick-makers, sailors, firemen, apprentices, youthful hooligans, etc., moved by bigotry, or the love of plunder, violence, and adventure, or by the hope of reward. The inner ring among them, "the party," may well have formed in advance a secret, oath-bound organization, as was intimated by various handbills circulated after the crime. This inner ring seems to have had both a Charlestown and a Boston section. As to the planning of the project, what meagre details have reached us point both to the already mentioned nocturnal meetings at the schoolhouse near Mount Benedict, which began immediately after the flight of Mary John, and also to similar gatherings in the West End of Boston. On his deathbed a few years later, Benjamin Wilbur, a volunteer member of Engine Company 13, who had been indicted as a rioter but had escaped arrest by flight, made an interesting confession, in which he stated that the burning of the convent was planned a fortnight before it took place and that several meetings were held for that purpose. When asked

³⁴ The words of one of the foremost Protestant citizens of Boston, George W. Bond, speaking at the meeting in Faneuil Hall Dec. 8, 1837 ("Documents Relating to the Charlestown Convent," *The Works of the Right Rev. John England, Collected and Arranged under the Advice and Direction of His Immediate Successor, the Right Rev. Ignatius Aloysius Reynolds, and Printed for Him in Five Volumes*, Baltimore, 1849, V, 343. Cf. *U.S. Cath. Miscellany*, Dec. 29, 1837).

³⁵ Statement of District Attorney Huntington (*Trial of John R. Buzzell before the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts for Arson and Burglary in the Ursuline Convent at Charlestown*, Boston: Russell, Odiorne, and Metcalf, 1834, p. 6); Judge Fay's letter of Jan. 2, 1835, to the *Boston Daily Courier*. Eight to ten months before it happened, Rebecca Reed is said to have announced that the convent 'would come down within a year' (*An Answer to Six Months in a Convent, By the Lady Superior*, Boston, 1835, p. xxxi).

whether the burning was planned in Engine House 13 (in Leverett Street), he would reply only 'that it was planned in Leverett Street, and that he belonged to No. 13.'³⁶ Whether the Boston truckmen — a powerful and self-assertive organization at that time — had any share in concocting or furthering this plot, as the handbills of August 10th might suggest, remains an open question.

What is much more certain is that the wretched personages who gathered at the schoolhouse and in Leverett Street and who sacked and burned the convent were themselves only the agents and tools of persons higher up in the social scale, who managed to keep under cover. Wilbur's confession included the admission that 'he was hired to do what he did . . . he should not have done it, had he not been urged to do it by older persons.' In pleading for a delay of the trials, Attorney-General Austin argued that it was clear that this grave crime had not yet been fastened on those who were most responsible for it. "We have, it is true," he said, "some of the instruments, and perhaps one or two of the instigators; but the more material parties are not now before the court."³⁷ In the course of the trials the Attorney-General declared with emphasis that Henry Buck (who had turned State's evidence) had been "set on" to take part in the riot, and he knew who set him on to it, knew it as well as it was possible to know any act; but that on this subject his mouth was sealed by certain rules of law.³⁸ Even the counsel for the defense admitted the same thing. At the second of the trials Attorney Prescott begged the jury to remember that the rioters were young men acting under the instigation of individuals better educated and moving in a higher sphere than themselves.³⁹

But who these "higher ups" were it is today impossible to say with any certainty. The only persons of any social standing who were arrested after the outrage were Prescott Pond and a dry-goods merchant of Boston named Wilder S. Thurston. The

³⁶ *Boston Mercantile Journal*, July 24, 1837; *Transcript*, July 24.

³⁷ *The Jesuit*, Oct. 25, 1834.

³⁸ *Bunker Hill Aurora*, Dec. 13, 1834.

³⁹ (Isaac W. Frye) *The Charlestown Convent: Its Destruction by a Mob . . .* (Boston, 1870), p. 64.

latter, because he was well-to-do and "respectable," received a great deal of sympathy in certain quarters; his name was ordinarily kept out of the newspapers; and he was finally let off without trial. Both these men belonged to the circle of friends of Rebecca Reed. So, at least during the year following the convent-burning, did her literary editor and arch-champion, Benjamin F. Hallett. In the summer of 1835 one well-informed Protestant writer described him as "undoubtedly the 'General Grand High King' of the anti-Catholic Fraternity."⁴⁰ In later years he was regarded by Catholics as having been "a prime mover in this horrible business" (of the destruction of Mount Benedict).⁴¹ Whether or not the suspicions attaching to him were well grounded, it would seem that such evidence as we have as to the "higher ups" involved in this affair points chiefly to the political-ecclesiastical camarilla that gathered around the great Miss Reed.

VII

The Ursuline affair had a long epilogue.

Bishop Fenwick was too deeply convinced of the need of such an academy as Mount Benedict had been not to seek to reëstablish one as soon as excitement had calmed down. On a visit to Maryland in 1836 he endeavored to obtain for this purpose a group of Visitation nuns, with whose highly successful academy at Georgetown he was very familiar and who would have the advantage of having no record of past controversies in this vicinity.⁴² When this plan, for unknown reasons, fell through, he resumed the idea of bringing back the Ursulines. Mother St. George had, at her own request, been transferred to the convent at New Orleans in 1836, and Sister Mary Bernard was dead; but the rest of the former Boston nuns returned here in the latter part of 1838, taking up their residence in a house

⁴⁰ (Richard S. Fay) "The Press and the Convent Question," *New England Magazine*, VIII, 454.

⁴¹ *Pilot*, Nov. 19, 1842.

⁴² Bishop Fenwick to Archbishop Eccleston, Aug. 11, 1836 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 24 V 2).

which the Bishop rented for them in Quincy Place, Fort Hill, under Mother Mary Benedict Barber as Superior.

This brave attempt at restoration did not, however, prove successful. Although no actual revival of persecution took place, parents were fearful that it might happen. The old clientèle, or an adequate clientèle, could not be secured. Financial difficulties grew insurmountable, and it must be added that the new Superior, in spite of brilliant talents, did not prove equal to her task. In 1840-1841, therefore, the Boston community of Ursulines had to be disbanded, the members retiring to the convents at Quebec or Trois-Rivières or to New Orleans. Most of them lived long — and beautiful — lives in these peaceful cloisters, or in others to which they were eventually sent, but more than one of them always cherished the dream that some day their Boston convent would rise again from its ashes.

Such a consummation depended essentially upon the willingness of the Massachusetts Legislature at last to grant an indemnification for an outrage which, not only in this country but throughout Europe, was regarded as a disgrace to this Commonwealth. For years that question was always being revived — not through the action of the Bishops of Boston, but through the Catholic press, and even more through the efforts of high-minded Protestants. Comparative silence was, indeed, observed about the matter for a time after the failure of 1835. But in 1839 a first step forward was made when the General Court passed an act rendering cities and towns financially liable for property destroyed within their limits by mobs. In 1841, 1842, 1843, 1844, 1846, then, each year the question of compensation to the Ursulines was threshed out before the Legislature. The most active champion of the measure during these years was George Ticknor Curtis, a Boston lawyer, son-in-law of Justice Story, of the United States Supreme Court, and brother of Benjamin R. Curtis, later also a member of that tribunal. The first petition for the project in 1841 was headed by John Greenleaf Whittier, the poet. And in 1843, when the most serious effort was made, the chief petition in favor of the Ursulines was headed by Abbott Lawrence (perhaps the foremost

merchant prince of that time), and two thousand other citizens of Boston, including such names as Harrison Gray Otis, James T. Austin, Charles Sumner, James Russell Lowell, George Bancroft, Charles Francis Adams, Wendell Phillips, and William Lloyd Garrison. Indeed, George T. Curtis declared:

Of this petition I venture to say that there has rarely been one presented to our legislature bearing a greater weight of character. It was signed by very nearly the whole of the Bar, by the clergy of the liberal denominations, and by a large body of the most respectable merchants and mechanics. In fact it embraced men in every occupation in our city, without distinction of sect or party.⁴³

The men who signed and worked for these petitions voiced the conscience and will of all that was best among the Boston Protestants of that time. They were nobly maintaining the best traditions of Massachusetts. But the mass of the public was not with them. The voice that prevailed was the voice of bigotry, clamoring that if reparation were made for what everyone — in public — admitted had been an atrocious outrage, the State would thereby be encouraging and endowing Popery, would be establishing “one of those sinks of iniquity, a nunnery, on soil consecrated by our Puritan fathers to the Protestant faith.”⁴⁴ On each occasion the country districts stood solid in opposition and indemnification was snowed under by huge majorities.

In 1852, 1853, 1854 the question was revived. In the second of these years, thanks to a peculiar political constellation, to the rising size of the Irish vote, and to the driving leadership of Benjamin F. Butler, of Lowell, a bill for indemnifying the Ursulines almost got through the House of Representatives, being defeated by only 120 to 111. In 1854, however, virtually the same bill was overwhelmingly defeated (186 to 26), and with this landslide followed by the rise of the Know-Nothing party, Catholics and their friends realized that the matter had become a dead issue.

⁴³ *Pilot*, April 8, 1843.

⁴⁴ *Boston Recorder*, Sept. 16, 1842.

The property on Mount Benedict, which by 1844 had been transferred by the Ursulines to the ownership of the Bishop of Boston, remained for decades virtually unoccupied and unused, with the ruins of the convent confronting the Bunker Hill Monument as if to contrast the glory and the shame of Massachusetts. In 1875 Archbishop Williams finally sold this land in order to facilitate plans for transforming that part of Somerville. Between that date and 1897 the hill was almost entirely leveled, the soil being used to fill in the Middlesex Canal and the marsh land along the Mystic. The site is now thickly covered with houses. Only two important historical mementoes of Mount Benedict now remain. The one is the arch of the front vestibule of the Boston Cathedral, formed of bricks preserved from the ruined wall of the convent. The other is the stone memorial tablet, originally set up by the City of Somerville in 1901, which, after a disappearance and a recovery, was in 1915 placed by the Mount Benedict Council of the Knights of Columbus on a small lot owned by them near the corner of Illinois Avenue and Broadway.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ The literature of the Ursuline affair is very extensive. The best bibliography is in George Hill Evans, *The Burning of the Mount Benedict Ursuline Community House* (Somerville, 1934). The most useful collections of sources bearing on the subject are two works already cited: (Isaac W. Frye), *The Charlestown Convent; Its Destruction by a Mob . . . also the Trials of the Rioters* (Boston, 1870), and *Documents Relating to the Imposture of Rebecca T. Reed, and the Burning of the Ursuline Convent, at Charlestown, Mass.*, in Bishop England's *Works*, V (Baltimore, 1849), 232-347. The most recent account is that by Professor Ray Allen Billington, "The Burning of the Charlestown Convent," *The New England Quarterly*, X (1937), 4-24. The author of the present chapter has, by permission, quoted freely here from his previous essay, "Religious Liberty in New England: the Burning of the Charlestown Convent, 1834," in *U.S. Cath. Hist. Soc., Records and Studies*, XXII (1932), 7-31.

Only one original picture of the convent prior to its destruction has come down to us: one which appeared at the top of the first and only "prospectus" of the school ever issued, that of 1828. This picture, reproduced in Thomas F. O'Malley, *New England's First Convent School* (n.p., 1901), and in numerous other works, appeared, somewhat retouched and enlarged, in an engraving made by George H. Walker and Company, of Boston, and copyrighted by Charles D. Elliott, of Somerville, in 1883. These representations fail to show the convent at its best, after the extensive planting of gardens, trees, and shrubbery that took place between 1828 and 1834. Pictures of the ruins are too numerous to mention.

CHAPTER IX

NATIVE AMERICANISM (1834-1846)

I

THE THREE OR FOUR YEARS beginning with the burning of the Charlestown convent were, perhaps, the darkest years in the history of the Church in New England.

Throughout the country, indeed, the anti-Catholic crusade seemed to take on a greatly increased impetus from the example set by the Boston and Charlestown mob. At New York, the grand headquarters of the movement, the Protestant Reformation Society, formed in 1836, attempted to build up a nationwide organization, affiliating local anti-Catholic societies, directing propaganda, and sending lecturers far and wide to expose the "abominations" and perils of "Romanism." At New York, too, were published the two chief journals devoted to the cause, the *American Protestant Vindicator* and the *Downfall of Babylon* — journals which for frenzied denunciation of all things Catholic and for wild and shameless mendacity have probably never been surpassed. In these years, likewise, amid a flood of anti-Catholic books, there appeared three works which might rank as classics of the No Popery movement. These were the *Awful Disclosures of the Hotel Dieu Nunnery of Montreal*, ostensibly by Maria Monk;¹ the *Foreign Conspiracy against the Liberties of the United States*, by the New Englander, Samuel F. B. Morse;² and *A Plea for the West*, by the Rev. Lyman Beecher.³ As the latter two titles suggest, the attack, hitherto directed almost exclusively against the Catholic religion, was now being varied by increasing emphasis upon the dangers of Catholic immigration. To meet this peril the crusade for the first time entered the political field with the

¹ 1st edition, New York, 1836.

² New York, 1835.

³ Cincinnati, 1835.

formation in 1835, at New York, New Orleans, Cincinnati, and elsewhere, of "Native American Associations," whose primary aims were to obtain a reform of the naturalization laws and restrictions upon immigration.

In New England this intensified campaign against the Church was duplicated, in some respects in more moderate, but in other respects in more extreme, form. Attacks multiplied both from the regular Evangelical clergy and from professional anti-Catholic itinerant lecturers, whose violent language and gross misrepresentations often put the patience of Catholics to a severe strain. Fanatical preachers invaded the Cathedral rectory in Boston to challenge the clergy to public debate or to convert the Bishop.⁴ Methodists and Universalists held public discussions of the question, "Ought the Roman Catholic Church to be in any way acknowledged as a Christian Church, either by the Protestant Churches or the Government of this country?"⁵

The Evangelical journals and a growing number of secular newspapers vied with each other in finding terms of abuse strong enough for "Popery." It was characteristic of their pertinacity in all uncharitableness that, when the utter and revolting falsity of the *Awful Disclosures* had been abundantly demonstrated, one of the Boston religious organs stoutly insisted that "Maria Monk's book bears internal, irrefragable, irrefutable evidence of truth"; while another put forth the theory that the *Disclosures* had been concocted between Maria Monk and the priests of Montreal in order to make all books against convents seem ridiculous.⁶ If the Catholic clergy could not be convicted of cruelty and licentiousness, they must, at least, be charged with serpentine cunning and trickery.

In general, Catholics in those years were constantly exposed to vituperation, invectives, insults, assaults, and arson. Gangs of young rowdies infested the streets of Boston and other cities, eager to insult and beat up the "Paddies." Rumors were fre-

⁴ Father Tyler's *Diary*, July 4, 1835 (*Hartford Dioc. Arch.*); Bishop Fenwick's *Memoranda*, Aug. 13, 1836.

⁵ *Pilot*, Dec. 24, 1836; Oct. 28, 1838.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Sept. 24, Oct. 29, 1836.

quent about plots to burn Catholic churches. In the spring of 1836, for instance, St. Mary's, Boston, had to be guarded each night against incendiaries by picked members of the congregation.⁷ When, somewhere about that time, an attempt was made to get that new church insured, only one firm was willing to undertake it, and that at four times the ordinary premium. The reason, frankly stated, was that "if the church caught fire, the firemen would make no effort to save it, and the risk was four times as much as that of any other building."⁸

The year 1835, when the excitement produced by the Ursuline affair was still running high, was marked by frequent outrages. In May a mob of ruffians, calling themselves "Convent Boys," surrounded the hotel at Wareham where the Catholics were gathered for worship, and threatened "to destroy the Popish priest, the hotel, and all the d — d Irish." The service had to be abandoned, while the congregation fled for their lives.⁹ In July there was a new anti-Irish riot at Bangor.¹⁰ For August 11th the firemen of Boston and Charlestown had made elaborate plans to celebrate publicly the anniversary of "Mount Benedict," but found their project thwarted by the stern prohibition and the military precautions of the Boston, Charlestown, and Roxbury authorities. After a little rioting, the discomfited mob trooped over to Chelsea and consoled themselves by shooting Bishop Fenwick in effigy.¹¹ A month later the Washington Artillery Company revived colonial custom by parading through the streets of Boston bearing an effigy of the Pope, which they finally set up and used for target practice.¹²

The following year passed off more peacefully. The one notable instance of violence was that the monument which Bishop Fenwick had erected at Norridgewock, Maine, on the spot where Father Rasle was slain, was secretly thrown down

⁷ *Memoranda*, March 20, 1836.

⁸ Statement made by Dr. H. B. C. Greene in the House of Representatives (*Pilot*, Feb. 13, 1841).

⁹ *Catholic Sentinel*, May 30, 1835.

¹⁰ *Boston Daily Advocate*, July 17; *American Traveller*, July 24.

¹¹ *Bunker Hill Aurora*, Aug. 8, 15, 1835; *Memoranda*, Aug. 14.

¹² *Memoranda*, Sept. 10, 1835.

by bigots. The respectable citizens of the town, however, at once combined to save the good name of the community by restoring the monument at their own expense.¹³ But this relative quiet was the lull between storms. The next year, 1837, was to witness the two worst explosions of mob violence against the Irish that Boston has ever known.

II

The first of these was the Broad Street Riot of June 11th.

The Boston firemen, the protagonists in this drama, were then almost entirely drawn from the native stock, and chiefly from those poorer strata of the population among whom hostility to the Catholics and the Irish was fiercest. The engine-men had already given a fair sample of their sentiments at the time of the convent-burning. Strong in political influence and proud of their valiant and unpaid services as the guardians of public security, they were inclined to consider themselves above the law and entitled to do almost anything that pleased their fancy.

Broad Street, the principal scene of the outbreak, was then a much longer thoroughfare than it is now. It included not only the present street of that name, then called "Old Broad Street," which was the chief centre of the Irish colony in Boston, but also its extension — "New Broad Street" — along what is now called Atlantic Avenue as far as Summer Street, and beyond, along what was still popularly called Sea Street (now part of Federal Street), as far as the South Boston bridge.

The circumstances that precipitated the riot — and which it would be important to know in detail if the responsibility is ever to be accurately fixed — are surrounded by not a few mysteries and uncertainties.¹⁴ At all events, the affair clearly

¹³ *Memoranda*, Aug. 13, 1836; Bishop Fenwick to William Allen, Sept. 7, 1836 (*Arch., Maine Hist. Soc.*).

¹⁴ It is surprising that the Broad Street Riot — one of the most tragic episodes in the history of Boston — has received but scanty attention from historians. The chief works that attempt to describe it in any detail are: Justin Winsor (ed.), *The Memorial History of Boston*, III (Boston, 1881), 245 f.; Arthur W.

developed out of two distinct disturbances: first, one in East Street and then one in New Broad Street.

About three o'clock on that hot Sunday afternoon Engine Company Number 20 returned from a fire in Roxbury to its quarters in East Street. Part of the members went home and part repaired for drinks to a neighboring store. The latter group, on their return to their engine house, found the street largely filled with a crowd of Irishmen — over one hundred in number — who were waiting to join in a funeral procession which was soon to start from a house just around the corner, in Sea Street. While the crowd seemed peaceable enough and the other firemen passed through it with no difficulty, trouble began with the return of the last engineman, George Fay. This nineteen-year-old youth, who had lingered longer than his comrades over his cups, came swaggering through the crowd, smoking a cigar, and appears either to have jostled some of the mourners or to have made an insulting remark to them. At any rate, a fight started. The other firemen rushed to Fay's aid, but, being badly outnumbered, got the worst of it, and two of them were severely beaten. The only officer about, the third foreman, W. W. Miller, came out and ordered his men back to the engine house. They ran for it, with the Irishmen in pursuit.

At this point Miller seems to have lost his head completely. Had he merely gathered his men inside, barred the doors, and waited a few minutes until the funeral was ready, all trouble would probably have been over. Instead, he appears to have been carried away either with fear or with rage and thirst for revenge. In the twinkling of an eye he determined to summon all the other firemen of Boston either to come to his rescue or to take vengeance on the Irish.

Brayley, *A Complete History of the Boston Fire Department* (Boston, 1889), pp. 197-199; and *History of the Catholic Church in the New England States*, I, 64 f.; and these accounts are marred by numerous gaps and inaccuracies. The present narrative is based mainly on a study of virtually all the Boston newspapers of the time, which form almost the only original sources available, but whose incomplete and often conflicting accounts, both of the riot itself and of the evidence presented at the ensuing trials, leave many problems apparently insoluble.

As a first step he ordered his engine out into the street and had its bell sounded — a false fire alarm. He dispatched men to ring the bell of the neighboring New South Church, and, probably, that of a church in Purchase Street. Next, he ran to the house of Engine Company Number 8, in Common Street, and, evidently wild with excitement, adjured the firemen there to come at once; "The Irish," he said, "have risen upon us, and are going to kill us."¹⁵ Whether he also sent messengers to other neighboring companies, especially Number 9 in Mason Street — the nearest of all — remains a mystery.

At any rate, by the time he returned to his own engine house a few minutes later, all was quiet in East Street. The Irishmen had, indeed, retired the moment Number 20's bell was rung, either from alarm over what might happen or because the funeral procession was now ready to start. The hearse, followed by a few carriages and four to five hundred mourners on foot, had begun to move northward on Sea Street, on the way to the Bunker Hill Cemetery in Charlestown. But Number 20's men were, evidently, bent on pursuing them and on renewing the battle as soon as other companies should come up. "Let the Paddies go ahead, and then we'll start," one of them called out.¹⁶ And a bystander who, from the corner of East and Sea Streets, was watching the receding procession, later testified that he heard behind him a shout, "Here they come with their coats off!" and turning back he saw men rushing out of the engine house with huzzas and cries of "Now look out! Now for it!" and running towards Sea Street.¹⁷

The procession proceeded little more than a block in peace. Even during that brief period Engine Company Number 14, coming over from Water Street uninformed as to the cause of the fire alarm, dashed by them in the direction of South Boston, and one of its men, seeing that these marchers were Irish, cried out, "Down with them!"¹⁸ Immediately afterwards,

¹⁵ His own testimony before the police court (*Transcript*, June 15, 1837).

¹⁶ Testimony of Hugh Green (*Morning Post*, June 16, 1837).

¹⁷ Testimony of Eben Parker, in *Morning Post*, *Atlas*, and *Courier*, June 28, 1837.

¹⁸ *Morning Post*, June 16, 1837.

when the procession had just passed from Sea Street into New Broad Street (i.e., very near the site of the present South Station), there occurred the fateful collision with Engine Company Number 9.

That collision is susceptible of diverse interpretations. According to the story put out by the firemen and their friends and accepted in a later report of the City Government — a report which did not escape charges of whitewashing — Engine Company Number 9 had started out at the sound of the alarm bell, quite ignorant of what had happened in East Street and supposing that there was a real fire. Passing through Bedford and down the declivity of Summer Street, they turned the corner into New Broad Street at a high rate of speed, and quite unexpectedly came upon the rear of the funeral procession, their engine slewing round in such a way as to hit — or to come very near to hitting — some of the marchers. The Irish, mindful of the fight with Number 20 and of the hostile demonstration from Number 14 but a few moments before, jumped at the conclusion that Number 9's men had intentionally insulted and assaulted them. At once the procession halted, and its members began to belabor the firemen with their fists. An accidental and unavoidable collision and a natural but regrettable misunderstanding on the part of the Irish — such, in brief, is the explanation of the matter that has commonly been accepted and which has the larger part of the sources in its favor.

But a very different explanation is suggested by the testimony of those few Irishmen who later ventured to appear as witnesses at the trials, by the arguments of the counsel for the Irish prisoners, and by certain bits of evidence coming from the Yankee side. According to this view, it may remain an open question whether Engine Company Number 9 did or did not arrive in ignorance of the fact that they had been called not to a fire but to a fight. At any rate, at the intersection of Summer Street with Sea and New Broad Streets they encountered a small crowd of men, who in all probability were the members of Number 20 and their friends, waiting for a chance to provoke a battle. These men at once rushed out to join Number

9's men, and no other than George Fay, "the very head and leader of the quarrel,"¹⁹ seized the rope and guided the engine in among the marchers, while some of the firemen tried to kick Irishmen and some cried, "Down with them!" "Trip up the horse!" (of the hearse), etc.²⁰ The Irish rightly, therefore, concluded that they were being deliberately challenged and attacked. Although their side of the case, as here outlined, never received a full and fair presentation, either in court or in the newspapers, this explanation would seem to be more probable and more in accord with the previous actions of Number 20's men than the explanation put forth by the firemen.

Whatever be the truth about the collision, at all events there began immediately a furious battle, fought with fists, with sticks and cudgels snatched from the wood-wharves across the street, and with stones, bricks, and any other missiles that came to hand. The funeral procession was, of course, quite broken up. The hearse, with stones flying thick around it, was for a time halted at the side of the street, although it was later able to proceed, unmolested and unattended, to Charlestown. The women marchers and the brother of the deceased man ran to Old Broad Street with wildly excited and exaggerated tales of what had happened. The hearse, it was reported, had been knocked over, the coffin smashed, the corpse thrown out and mutilated. From the firemen's side the story flew that two of their comrades lay dead in East Street, killed by the Irish.²¹ Reinforcements quickly arrived for both parties, especially for the firemen. One by one, nearly all the engine companies of Boston came up and joined in the fray, while an enormous crowd of onlookers gathered to enjoy the spectacle, and the combatants on both sides were excited almost to the point of frenzy.

At first the battle raged on almost equal terms, but soon the

¹⁹ So Attorney Harrington described him at the trials (*Atlas*, July 11, 1837).

²⁰ *Morning Post*, June 15, 16, 1837; *Atlas*, June 17, July 11; *Commercial Gazette*, June 15, July 13; *Times*, June 16.

²¹ The exaggerated stories believed by both sides were well brought out by County Attorney Parker in his summing up at the last trial (*Commercial Gazette*, July 17, 1837).

firemen, rallying many sympathizers from the crowd, began to gain an ever-increasing superiority in numbers. Gradually the Irish were driven back the length of New Broad Street. Flanking engagements were also fought in Purchase Street and on Fort Hill, from whose at that time rather commanding summit an Irish party of thirty men for half an hour successfully repelled all onslaughts. Presently the invaders approached the entrance to Old Broad Street, and there the fiercest part of the struggle developed. Aroused by tales that the firemen intended to kill all the Irish and to destroy their homes, most of the Broad Street population who had not hitherto been engaged, turned out to defend themselves. The women were as active as the men. They urged on the combatants, supplied them with missiles, tore the bricks and stones from their hearths for that purpose, and, as the battle reached their doors, hurled tables, chairs, crockery, and whatever else was available upon the heads of the firemen. Nevertheless, through sheer weight of numbers and by converging attacks from all the adjacent streets, the invaders finally beat down all opposition. By six o'clock, the two hours' battle was over. The firemen and their allies were masters of the field, and their enemies had retreated within their houses or fled to the neighboring wharves.

Meanwhile, the plundering and devastation of Irish homes had already begun. The firemen may have started it by breaking into houses where their opponents had taken refuge or from which missiles had been thrown at them. But all evidence points to the conclusion that most of this disgraceful work was done by stout loafers and young hooligans who had followed in the wake of the firemen and now seized the chance for an orgy of looting and destruction. No attempt was made to distinguish between the property of those Irishmen who had, and those who had not, taken part in the fighting. Wherever the marauders broke in, they smashed the windows and doors, stole whatever they coveted, and then proceeded with savage thoroughness to destroy everything else. Clothing was torn to shreds; shoes were cut to pieces; furniture and household goods of all kinds were thrown into the streets. Feather

beds were ripped up and their contents scattered to the wind in such quantities that for a while Broad Street seemed to be having a snowstorm, and even next morning the pavement in spots was buried ankle-deep in feathers. Old people, sick women, and terrified children were driven from their homes without mercy, robbed of everything except the clothes they wore, and in some cases having lost the savings of a lifetime. In all, 29 families, including 122 persons, were plundered in this fashion.²²

Before the vandals could proceed further, however, and complete their work, as they might well have done, by wiping out the whole Irish colony in Broad Street, the authorities at last intervened effectively. Mayor Samuel A. Eliot (the father of President Eliot, of Harvard) had been on the scene from an early moment of the contest, as had Sheriff Sumner. Both had tried expostulating with the combatants and both had been knocked down.²³ As Boston still had no police force worthy of the name, the few constables in the streets could only look on helplessly. The only resource was to assemble the militia — no easy matter on a Sunday afternoon. At any rate, some time between six and seven that evening, the military at last made their appearance at the State Street end of Broad Street. First came a newly formed cavalry corps, the Boston Lancers, resplendent in brilliant uniforms, with the Mayor, the Aldermen, and the Common Council in the line with them. Behind marched ten companies of infantry. As this majestic procession swept down Broad Street, the rioting came to an abrupt conclusion. Within a few minutes order was completely restored, although the militia remained on guard throughout the night.

It is a remarkable fact that, in spite of the intensity of the fighting, no one was killed in this disturbance. How many were wounded cannot be estimated.

By nightfall thirty-four bleeding Irishmen had been arrested

²² According to the investigations of a committee of Boston gentlemen, whose report appeared in most of the newspapers on June 13.

²³ *Daily Advocate*, June 13, 1837.

as "rioters." Most of them had been captured in the course of the fighting and turned over to the constables; and, it is painful to relate, many of them had been atrociously beaten by the mob before or even after their arrest. Two citizens, indignant that not a single Yankee had been apprehended, had seized a few of the looters in Broad Street, but these were promptly liberated by the mob or released by the militia, to whom they had been turned over.

Of the Irishmen arrested, nearly half were discharged next day, while, in response to the outcry in the newspapers, in the course of the next two weeks eight Yankees were tardily placed under arrest. In July the grand jury brought indictments against fourteen Irishmen and four natives. The trial jury — made up, of course, only of Protestant native Americans — convicted three Irishmen, who were sentenced, one to four months, and the others to two months, in the House of Correction. All the Yankees were acquitted, amid the applause of the spectators, except one youth named Mark Adams, who by "jumping his bail" and running away had virtually confessed himself guilty.

If this outcome served further to convince the Catholic Irish that where they were concerned justice in Massachusetts was very blind indeed, the sufferers in Broad Street derived slight consolation from their appeals to the municipal authorities for compensation for their losses. The reply given them was that the City had neither the power nor the duty to grant compensation in such cases. Some aid seems to have been furnished them, however, through the efforts of a committee of liberal-minded citizens.

That the true lesson of this affair was not lost upon the City Government was speedily demonstrated. After first putting forth a weak official report on the late riot, in which the firemen were absolved from all serious blame, the Mayor and the governing boards then deliberately picked a quarrel with the enginemen over the fact that the companies constantly admitted minors as members, in violation of an ordinance of 1835. The examples of George Fay and many another were there to illustrate what harm could come from this employ-

ment of indiscreet and irresponsible boys. The companies, as had probably been expected, refused to sacrifice their young friends, and rather than submit they resigned *en masse*. The upshot, therefore, was that Boston obtained a new and much improved Fire Department, whose members, being paid an annual salary, might be held to stricter standards of discipline than had ever prevailed in the companies that perpetrated the Broad Street Riot.

III

The excitement over this affair had scarcely died down when there occurred a perhaps still more disgraceful outbreak: the Riot against the Montgomery Guards on September 12th.

The volunteer military organizations of Boston were at that time both the pride of the city and a very essential safeguard to life, property, and public order in an age afflicted with riots. The periodical musters and maneuvers of the militia companies on the Common, their frequent parades through the city in their bright and variegated uniforms, their outings in the country, their "elegant suppers" at the homes of wealthy members — all this must have helped to convince spirited young men that it was both a privilege and a civic duty to belong to one of these corps. The various Boston organizations combined formed the Third Brigade, First Division, Massachusetts Militia, which included a Light Infantry Regiment which was regarded as the crack regiment of the country.

For several years some Boston citizens of Irish blood had aspired to share the responsibilities and privileges of the militia by forming a company of their own, but had always been refused permission. In January, 1837, however, John C. Tucker and thirty-nine others presented a new petition which, with the recommendations of the highest officers of the militia, received the approval of the Executive Council and of Governor Edward Everett in February. There thus came into existence a new (tenth) company of light infantry, which assumed the name of the Montgomery Guards in honor of General Richard Mont-

gomery, the Irish-born hero of the Revolution, who fell before Quebec. The great majority of the members were naturalized Irishmen or sons of Irishmen, including many of the finest Catholics of Boston, such as Andrew Carney, Thomas Mooney, or Edwin A. Palmer. There were, however, some Americans of the older stock, including a few Protestants, among whom was the elected captain, William S. Baxter (who later became a Catholic). One mistake was made in that a number of Irishmen not yet naturalized were admitted, in spite of the legal restriction that none but American citizens could be received into the militia. This error — the only handle that the Montgomery Guards ever gave to their enemies — was committed because of a mistaken notion that a man acquired the privileges of American citizenship as soon as he had made his "primary declaration" looking towards naturalization. The uniform adopted was green, with scarlet facings and gold trimmings. The cap-plate showed the harp of Erin, surmounted by the American eagle, with the motto, borrowed from the Charitable Irish Society, "Fostered under thy wings, we will die in thy defense." The new company made their first appearance on the day of the Broad Street Riot, when they conducted themselves in a way to win general approval. On June 27th they held their first parade through the city, and, "together with their invited guests, sat down to a sumptuous entertainment at Concert Hall," followed by "a collation at the residence of Mr. Andrew Carney, in Ann Street."²⁴

Unfortunately, however, such was the temper of the time that even this innocent and laudable Irish-American enterprise at once aroused widespread and passionate disapproval. To the more moderate critics it seemed improper that citizens of Irish stock should segregate themselves in this way and emphasize their attachment to the home of their ancestors, instead of renouncing all their old associations and becoming wholly assimilated to other Americans. Others denounced the new company as simply a corps of armed foreigners on American soil, who might be expected to make serious trouble at the

²⁴ *Mercantile Journal*, June 29, 1837.

next repetition of the Broad Street Riot. And at the back of many minds was, doubtless, the idea that all Catholic immigrants were the tools of the plot hatched by the Pope and the other foreign despots to destroy the liberties of America, and that it was outrageous on the part of the State to put arms into the hands of its worst enemies.

Among the most offended were the other companies of the Light Infantry Regiment, conscientiously aggrieved or socially humiliated at seeing these "low foreigners" incorporated in their ranks. Finding the State authorities, both political parties, and most of the newspaper press in what they thought abject subservience to the Irish, they determined — not perhaps, by any formal argument, but by "daily conversations" ²⁵ — to make a resounding demonstration of their sentiments.

The occasion was furnished by the muster of the Boston Brigade, ordered to be held on the Common on the 12th of September. At seven-thirty that morning the various companies gathered. At nine the Light Infantry Regiment was to form in line. The older companies took their places, and, as the critical moment approached, a whisper ran through the ranks of most of them which proved them so unanimous that they were sure of acting together.²⁶ As soon as the Montgomery Guards, the newest company, came into line, therefore, the City Guards — the ringleaders of the opposition — at the order of a sergeant and contrary to the commands of their captain, marched off the Common and, with colors flying and their band playing "Yankee Doodle," paraded through the city back to their armory. They were followed in similar fashion by the Lafayette Guards, the Boston Fusiliers, the Washington Light Infantry, and half of the Mechanics' Riflemen, and at noon by the Winslow Blues. In all, six companies left the field without their officers and in flagrant disobedience to orders.

With the four remaining infantry companies and the several cavalry and artillery units, the Boston Brigade continued, in discouraged and abbreviated fashion, the maneuvers appointed

²⁵ So it was explained in the statement issued by the City Guards Oct. 5, 1837.

²⁶ *Herald and Star*, Sept. 14, 1837.

for the occasion. All through the day, however, the Montgomery Guards were insulted and hooted at by rowdies among the spectators. Stones were thrown at them, efforts were made to tear down their marquee, and it was clear that a new anti-Irish riot was brewing.

About six o'clock the companies were dismissed and the Montgomery Guards started to march back to their armory in Dock Square, near Faneuil Hall. With that the worst trouble of the day began. All along the way the green-clad soldiers found the streets lined with a hostile crowd, while a growing mob accompanied and pursued them. They were overwhelmed with jeers, taunts, insults, and opprobrious epithets. They advanced amid a constant shower of paving stones, bricks, coal, bottles, and other missiles. Once more the constables of Boston looked on quite passively. A few indignant citizens who tried to seize some of the cowardly assailants were knocked down by the mob.²⁷ Not one of the other militia companies close at hand would come to the aid of their sorely beset comrades.

For soldiers so outrageously provoked and in no slight peril of their lives, the temptation must have been great to use the arms which they had in their hands. Had they done so, the affray might easily have developed into the bloodiest riot that Boston had ever known; and it is likely that this was just what the leaders of the mob were aiming at. Fortunately, however, Captain Baxter had given his men strict orders to take no notice of any insults and to give no cause for offense; and nobly did they obey these instructions. With bruised heads, bleeding faces, and hearts doubtless tingling with righteous wrath, they marched through that inferno apparently oblivious to all insults and attacks, never resorting to retaliation, never losing their soldierly bearing and precision, with a courage, a forbearance, and a self-control that were truly magnificent.

Arrived in Dock Square, the Guards faced a final moment of crisis. Three thousand people surrounded their armory, and there were threats to storm and demolish the building. At this point, however, Mayor Eliot appeared, and, with the aid

²⁷ *Mercantile Journal*, Sept. 13, 1837.

of other respected citizens, succeeded in persuading the rioters reluctantly to disperse.

Next morning Boston seemed to be overwhelmed with such a wave of moral indignation as had been witnessed on no previous occasion when Irish Catholics had been attacked. In the press there was but one voice: censure and reprobation for the six companies that left the field; vehement condemnation for the mob; and unbounded praise for the Montgomery Guards. And as a proof that this time the community was in earnest in the desire to see justice done, four native-born rioters were brought to trial; a jury of natives convicted three of them; and they were sentenced to three (in one case to two) years of imprisonment at hard labor.

But how feeble and short-lived was the will to justice even among the upper classes and how tenacious was the bigotry of the masses was demonstrated when it came to punishing the six companies and vindicating the rights of the Montgomery Guards. Governor Everett, pushed on by various advisers, notably by Major General Bradley, commander of the Third Brigade, did, indeed, set out to act with great vigor in an affair that was held to be crucial for upholding discipline among the militia. The officers of the six companies, accused of negligence and of complicity with the mutineers, were arrested and were to be court-martialed. But this latter plan was not carried through because Colonel Smith, commander of the Light Infantry Regiment, refused to prefer the necessary charges. The officers were freed. The supposedly disgraced companies again and again paraded in triumph through the city, while the authorities did not dare allow the Montgomery Guards to appear in public for fear that the mere sight of them would precipitate a riot worse than the last.

After months of deliberation and after every kind of influence had been brought to bear in favor of those guilty of the most flagrant insubordination and against the company that had done its duty, the weak-kneed Governor decided upon a compromise. He first disbanded the six companies (February 23, 1838), although in a way that spared them explicit public

censure. Next, complying with a demand which the mutineer companies and their friends had long been making, he disbanded the Montgomery Guards also (April 6, 1838). It was not pretended that the latter had done anything to merit such a blow, or that they had ever shown themselves to be other than efficient soldiers and honorable gentlemen. The sole ground for the action was that the continued existence of the corps would constitute a chronic menace to peace and order.

The Guards replied with a vigorous and manly farewell address to the public, in which they set forth in detail how disgracefully they had been treated.

The Executive Council [they declared] has added insult to injury, and inflicted the last wound on our feelings of honor as soldiers by disbanding the Company for fear that if it should parade, the rioters would again show their contempt for law and order, and thus disturb the public peace. The innocent are made to suffer for the guilty, and the Sovereign State yields its power to a factious mob in the city of Boston.

They had, at least, they continued, the satisfaction of being conscious that the privileges of which they were being deprived had never been tarnished or disgraced by any conduct of theirs.²⁸

It is difficult to regard this action of the State Government as anything but a shameful capitulation before the forces of bigotry and anarchy. Whatever may have been the danger of further riots against the Montgomery Guards, it could probably have been met by firm and courageous leadership on the part of the Executive and by arousing the support of the better elements in the community. The results of the surrender are visible in a report presented that spring by a committee of the General Court, which declared: "We regret to say that . . . the militia of this Commonwealth is in a condition approaching a state of total disorganization."²⁹

To complete the irony of the story, while the Montgomery

²⁸ *Pilot*, May 19, 1838.

²⁹ *Resolves, 1838*, chapter 67 (*Mass. State Arch.*).

Guards remained permanently dissolved, most of the companies that left the field were soon rechartered by a complaisant government with the same uniforms, substantially the same officers and personnel, and only a change of name.³⁰

IV

It was amid the excitement produced by the two riots of 1837 that the first attempt was made to found an anti-Catholic political party in New England. On October 21st of that year there appeared at Boston a new newspaper, *The American*, which announced itself as devoted to the cause of the ex-firemen and the militia — those victims of “the lawless foreign tyranny” — to the dissemination of Native American principles, and to the exposition of the dangers and errors of Catholicism. During the winter it made constant but apparently fruitless efforts to organize a Native American Association, like that in New York; and once the agitation about the Montgomery Guards subsided, in April, 1838, it died.

Elsewhere in New England Nativist societies seem to have sprung up here and there. To such organizations may probably be ascribed the petitions sent to Washington at the beginning of 1838 by 325 citizens of Millbury, Massachusetts, and by 282 citizens of Sutton, demanding the repeal of the naturalization laws — petitions which led to a considerable debate in Congress. The only Native American Association that achieved signal results — of a kind — was that of Burlington, Vermont, which is said to have taken for its aims: first, to burn the Catholic church of that town; secondly, to ride Father O’Callaghan on a rail; and, thirdly, to begin the general expulsion of foreigners, especially the Irish.³¹ The first of these objects was

³⁰ The Adjutant-General’s Department in the State House possesses a remarkably complete and well-arranged collection of official documents, bearing upon the Montgomery Guards and the six companies — a collection made by the Archivist, Mr. Fred W. Cross, who very obligingly put it at the disposal of the writer. Edward Everett’s diary and correspondence, now in the archives of the Massachusetts Historical Society, also form a capital source for the history of this affair.

³¹ Father O’Callaghan to Bishop Fenwick, June 6, 1838 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

duly accomplished. On the night following May 8, 1838, in Father O'Callaghan's absence, St. Mary's Church was totally destroyed by a fire which was clearly of incendiary origin. At an indignant public meeting of the citizens of Burlington, held some days later, three selectmen and five other gentlemen were appointed a committee to ferret out the authors of this crime and report to a second meeting. The investigation brought out enough evidence to implicate rather deeply a group of shopkeepers, college students, and others, forming the Nativist society above mentioned; but at this point the prudent committee seems to have decided to go no further, lest they should learn too much. No report was ever made; no more meetings were held; and the church-burners went unpunished.³²

The first flurry of Native Americanism ended rather quickly, in New England as elsewhere, and for a few years the movement seemed almost dead. Meanwhile, however, its allies, the Evangelical crusaders against "Romanism," continued their campaign with often changing societies, journals, and technique, but with unchanging perseverance. One special objective of theirs in the early forties was to induce the various Protestant denominations to commit themselves collectively and formally to the No Popery cause. This effort met with a favorable response in New England chiefly from the Episcopalians (then much disturbed over the Oxford Movement), several of whose bishops issued vehement attacks upon Rome,³³ and from the Congregationalists. In 1844 the General Association of the Congregational Churches of Massachusetts accepted and published a *Report on Popery*, prepared by a committee of three ministers appointed to that task a year before, a report than which nothing more violent could well be imagined. Once more it was "proved" by those learned gentlemen that the Roman Church, whose characteristics were idolatry, despotism,

³² Letters of Father O'Callaghan to the Bishop, May 12, June 6, Sept. 7, 1838; *Pilot*, June 23, 1838.

³³ For instance, Rt. Rev. Alexander Viets Griswold, *The Reformation: a Brief Exposition of the Errors and Corruptions of the Church of Rome* (Boston, 1843).

covetousness, persecution, and apostasy, was, indeed, the Man of Sin, more idolatrous and abominable before God than the pagans, "Babylon, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus," and Anti-Christ.³⁴

The claim of Bishop Hughes, of New York, to a share of the public school funds for the support of Catholic schools and the controversy springing up in many places about the compulsory use of the Protestant version of the Bible in public schools added fuel to Evangelical and Nativist ardor.

Immigration, too, after lagging for a few years after the panic of 1837, began in the early forties to reach greater dimensions than ever. While Nativist propaganda on that subject during the thirties had centred chiefly upon the themes of "foreign paupers and criminals," or upon the alleged conspiracy between the Pope and the other "foreign despots," now greater emphasis came to be laid upon the disastrous effects of cheap foreign labor upon the wages and standards of living of the American workingman — a much more effective way of winning the support of the working classes.

Further grist to the Nativist mill was supplied by the rapidly growing number and political importance of the naturalized voters. Both of the two pretty evenly balanced major parties sought the support of the Irish, but the Democrats normally got most of it. The Whigs, with their unshakable conviction of the intellectual, social, and moral superiority of their party, became increasingly inclined to ascribe their frequent defeats to the "ignorant" and "corrupt" foreign voters.

Under these conditions Native Americanism took on a vigorous revival. This started in 1843 in New York, where early in the following year the party won the mayoralty election. It was continued in Philadelphia, where in May and July, 1844, Native Americans, with a strong infusion of Orangemen among them, perpetrated some of the worst anti-Catholic riots and church-burnings that this country has ever witnessed. New England could scarcely be expected to remain inactive.

³⁴ Rev. William Allen *et al.*, *Report on Popery, Accepted by the General Association of Massachusetts, June, 1844* (Boston, 1844).

An Orange Association appears to have been formed in Boston as early as the summer of 1843, and by the following spring charges were made that its members were marching through Irish sections of the city trying to provoke a fight by shouting insults against the Catholic religion.³⁵ Attempts to stir up anti-Irish riots at Providence and Bangor in June, 1844, were thwarted only by the vigorous action of local authorities.³⁶ On July 9th, under the inspiration, apparently, of the riots at Philadelphia, a meeting in Boston resolved on the formation of an "American Republican Association"; and on that most auspicious day, the 12th of July, a great gathering at Charlestown voted the establishment of the "Bunker Hill Native American Association."

These societies and the party of which they were the nuclei attained but slight importance until the national elections of November, 1844, came to put wind into their sails. When it became clear that Henry Clay, the idol of the Whigs, had been defeated by the narrowest of margins, and chiefly by the vote of New York, where hastily and illegally naturalized aliens were alleged to have decided the issue, Whigs and Nativists were seized with boundless indignation. Rome and Ireland, it was commonly said, had conquered America. In the first flush of that indignation crowds of Whigs decided to desert their party, at least temporarily, and join the Native Americans, who would "put these foreigners in their places." Conscious of vastly increased support, "the Natives" at once began to organize themselves as the party to whom the future belonged.

The chief demonstration of their suddenly acquired strength was given in the ensuing Boston municipal elections. The American Republicans having nominated for Mayor a jeweler named Thomas A. Davis, a three-party contest developed, which dragged on for two months through seven successive ballots, since a majority of all the votes cast was necessary for a choice. Finally, on February 28, 1845, Davis won. The new party had also elected twenty-four members of the Common Council and three Aldermen.

³⁵ *Pilot*, May 18, 1844.

³⁶ *Boston Recorder*, June 6, 1844; *Pilot*, June 29.

Flushed with this triumph, the Natives began to hold meetings and form associations far and wide throughout the State, as also in some other parts of New England, notably in Maine. A swarm of Native American newspapers appeared, while not a little help was received from the Evangelical and Whig press.

The movement drew its strength chiefly from the poorer classes in towns and cities: from the classes who had plundered the convent, plundered Broad Street, and mobbed the Montgomery Guards. Professional politicians and "rabble-rousers," a few men of standing, like General H. A. S. Dearborn (who had once leased his Roxbury estate to the Ursulines), and some dubious characters, like the ex-priest Hogan, of such dismal celebrity during the long years of the Hogan Schism in Philadelphia, were quick to come forward as leaders. The main-springs of the movement were an almost morbid fear and hatred of the Catholic Church and of Catholic immigrants.

As against "the ignorant, credulous, and superstitious foreigners, who have come, and are still coming in overwhelming numbers to our shores for the express purpose of undermining the 'Corner Stone of Universal Freedom,'" these "instruments of the bigoted despots of Europe," these "swarms of foreign idlers, convicts, and paupers,"³⁷ the Native Americans proposed: to restrict or altogether to cut off immigration;³⁸ to extend the period required for naturalization to twenty-one years; to deny the suffrage forever to naturalized citizens; and to exclude the foreign-born from all national, state, or local offices.³⁹ The slogan of the party was, "Americans shall rule America."

To an even greater degree Nativist newspapers and speeches were full of tirades against the Catholic Church, "this infernal church," the "concentration of all that degrades and debases mankind," the Inquisition, "the crafty and bloodthirsty Jesuits," the confessional, through which "the satellites (*sic*) of Rome enforce that unanimity of political action, for which the mass of emigrants are so distinguished," and in which "the mandate for a general butchery will be given, whenever the

³⁷ *American Republican*, Nov. 9, 1844.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, also Dec. 21.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, Dec. 21, 1844.

physical power of the Catholic population shall promise success." ⁴⁰ While the measures required to meet this peril were not so clearly formulated as with respect to immigrants, still it would appear from their press and orators that many Nativists would have been glad to impose the use of the Protestant Bible on all educational institutions, to forbid all Catholic schools, to forbid convents, to compel Catholic priests "to renounce all allegiance to the Pope of Rome, both temporal and spiritual," and if they refused — to banish altogether from this country an organization "the object of which is to extend a foreign and alien power." ⁴¹

In spite of such sentiments, the party succeeded in inflicting no concrete damage upon either the Church or the immigrants. Indeed, this second outbreak of political Nativism, although much stronger than that of the thirties, was to be almost equally short-lived. The first national party convention, convened at Philadelphia July 4, 1845 — a gathering which officially adopted the name "Native American" in place of "American Republican" — marked both the zenith of the movement and the beginning of its decline. When faced for the first time with the whole complex of national politics, the new party floundered hopelessly. The mass of the American public in that exciting year was getting more and more stirred up about Texas, Oregon, and slavery. The war with Mexico was in the making. It was impossible for the Nativists very long to keep attention focused upon a set of ideas so narrow, so bitter, so really un-American, so repugnant to natural instincts of justice and decency, as those upon which they monotonously strummed.

Mayor Davis of Boston, a kindly, inoffensive man, died before the end of his year in office. At the ensuing mayoralty election, as in the State elections at the close of 1845, the Native American candidates were badly defeated. In spite of great efforts to revive the party, it made a pitiful showing in the

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, Nov. 23, Dec. 21, 1844; *Weekly American Eagle*, June 14, 1845, etc.

⁴¹ *American Republican*, Nov. 9, 11, 16, Dec. 14, 1844; *Daily American Eagle*, Dec. 28.

elections of 1846, and thenceforth for some years seemed to be almost extinct.

V

The net results of the twenty years of obloquy and persecution directed against the Church, which have been described in the foregoing chapters, are not easy to evaluate.

With more intelligent and liberal-minded Protestants the anti-Catholic campaign probably defeated its own aims, producing a deeper disgust with bigotry and intolerance and a greater sympathy for Catholics. Thomas Wentworth Higginson, who as a boy, from the steps of his home in Cambridge, had watched the flames from the Ursuline Convent, declared long afterwards: "All that I had read of persecution never implanted so lasting a love of liberty as that one spectacle."⁴² One of the most eminent of Boston physicians, Dr. George C. Shattuck, dying twenty years after the event, left five hundred dollars by will to the Bishop of Boston, "in token," as he wrote, "of my sense of the great injustice done by the unindemnified destruction of the Ursuline Convent at Charlestown."⁴³ Many a Protestant, with eyes opened by tragic experience, would doubtless have subscribed to the words of a Boston newspaper written soon after the destruction of Mount Benedict:

In fact, there is an unwarrantable prejudice, and, at this day, an unfounded one, existing against Catholics. The whole course of Protestant instruction has been too intolerant towards them. From the Primer and the Catechism, where John Rogers, his wife, and nine small children figure in a woodcut, to the pulpit whence adults are edified with Lorenzo Dow's *Tales of the Mississippi*, adapted, amplified, and exaggerated by some reverend gentleman, upon whom the mantle of the itinerant seems to have fallen: all is too intolerant. There is not upon any subject more misapprehension than upon the faith of the Roman Church at the present day.⁴⁴

⁴² See his book *Cheerful Yesterdays* (Boston, 1898), pp. 34 f.

⁴³ *Pilot*, April 1, 1854.

⁴⁴ *Galaxy*, Aug. 16, 1834.

As for the much-assailed Catholic immigrants, one newspaper after the Montgomery Guards affair voiced the shamed conscience of the better elements in the community when it wrote:

All the evil passions of the land seem at present to find their targets in the persons of a weak handful of people from Ireland . . . What has been the conduct of the Irish under these multiplied insults and injuries? It has been such as to cover them with honor, and us with shame. Not a house has been burned, and, save in the casual riot in Broad Street, not a shillela has been raised in retaliation, or even in self-defense. They have borne all with the meekness recommended by the Founder of our common religion.⁴⁵

Nevertheless, with the broad masses of the native population the anti-Catholic propaganda seems to have had unmistakable success in giving new life and vigor to old misunderstandings, prejudices, and hatreds. The best proof of this is that, in spite of occasional lulls, the waves of No Popery feeling continued for thirty years to mount, each one higher than the last, until the climax was reached in the 1850's.

Upon the Catholic Irish the events in question naturally produced a deep and even burning sense of injustice, and of injustice heaped upon them primarily because of their faith. As *The Pilot* voiced their feelings on one occasion:

The laws may be outraged, property may be destroyed, and the public peace be broken with impunity, so long as the loss falls on nobody but Catholics. If they do not like this decision, let them change their religion, and then they will be protected like other good citizens; but while they obstinately persist in worshipping after the manner of their fathers, they have no claim to the protection of the laws. Such is the logic of Native Americanism, and thus has it worked in every instance where the Irish have been the victims of a lawless and brutal mob. . . . Yet this is termed a free country, where toleration exists on the subject of religion, and where the oppressed of other lands may find an asylum. It would be all these were it

⁴⁵ *Evening Gazette and General Advertiser*, Sept. 16, 1837.

not for the individuals who term themselves "Native Americans," and whose object appears to be to undo as fast as possible all that the heroes and legislators of the Revolution have achieved.⁴⁶

At all events, it can scarcely be doubted that persecution had its normal results in solidifying the persecuted race and in strengthening still further their devotion to their faith.

For Bishop Fenwick, whose prudent, mild, and forbearing conduct during all these crises cannot be too highly commended, the chalice of bitterness must often have seemed full. While his innermost feelings break forth only rarely in his diary or correspondence, still in one revealing letter to the Bishop of Quebec, written not long after the Ursuline affair, he described himself as: "Persecuted, insulted, with a heart half broken, and laboring under all the difficulties of an infidel sect who are every day seeking to entrap us."⁴⁷ There can be little doubt that by the tragic events of the middle years of his episcopate his spirit was crushed and that it never thoroughly revived.

⁴⁶ June 30, 1838.

⁴⁷ Nov. 18, 1834 (*Quebec Dioc. Arch.*).

CHAPTER X

CONTINUED PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH (1839-1846)

I

DESPITE ALL OPPOSITION, the last eight years of the Fenwick period saw the Church in New England growing as never before, and, at least as regards the number of the faithful, at a rate equaled in few other parts of the country. At this time churches were planted in almost the last of the larger communities in which none had previously existed; chapels and mission stations sprang up in dozens of the smaller towns and villages; and Catholicism began to gain a foothold even in those regions which, like most of New Hampshire and north central Massachusetts, had hitherto seemed impenetrable. Reviewing this progress in 1844, the *Boston Pilot* inquired whether anyone who had known New England thirty years, or even twelve years, before, could have dreamed of so wonderful, so cheering a transformation.¹

The number of the clergy grew from twenty-six in 1838 to thirty-nine in 1846. Of the thirty-nine new priests accepted or ordained for the Diocese during these years, twenty-five were natives of Ireland and eight were from other foreign countries. Of the six native Americans, only four had been born within the Diocese of Boston — although even this was progress, in view of the dearth of vocations that had so long prevailed hereabouts. With financial worries no longer quite so pressing as in earlier years, Bishop Fenwick was able to send an increasing number of candidates for the priesthood to the seminaries of Montreal and Baltimore, to Saint-Sulpice at Paris, and, from 1841 on, even to Rome. So great was the demand for clergymen, however, that the Bishop was forced to depend to a greater extent than at any previous time upon priests from

¹ March 9, 1844.

outside who came to proffer their services. Of the thirty-nine priests here in question, twenty-three were volunteers of this kind.

Some of the veterans of the preceding years passed from the stage at this time. Father Dennis Ryan, the first priest ordained for the Diocese of Boston, after faithfully serving the congregations of Newcastle and North Whitefield for over a quarter of a century (with two short interruptions), was seized with the "Western fever": he left New England early in 1846, and died, while pastor of Lockport, Illinois, August 29, 1852, reputed to be the third oldest priest in the United States.² Rev. Patrick Byrne, the second priest ordained for the Diocese by Bishop Cheverus, after thirteen years at St. Mary's, Charlestown, and a brief pastorate, in failing health, at New Bedford, died December 4, 1844. The beloved Father Michael Healy, who during the ten years of his priesthood, mostly spent at the Cathedral, had been, as the Bishop declared, "one of my main props,"³ passed away on July 8, 1840. Dr. O'Flaherty, who had returned to the Diocese in 1840 after seven years' absence in Ireland, died, pastor of Salem, March 29, 1846. He was undoubtedly the most popular priest of the period, hailed as "the second [Bishop] England," "the pride and boast of the Catholics of Boston."

Among the new figures on the scene were two future Bishops of Boston: John B. Fitzpatrick and John J. Williams, who returned from Saint-Sulpice to begin their priestly labors, the one in 1840 and the other in 1845. Notable, too, was an admirable pair of convert-priests, George J. Goodwin and George F. Haskins. The former, a native of Charlestown, had embraced the Catholic faith at the age of sixteen, and after long studies in Montreal and Paris returned in 1842, a young priest who seemed to offer the most brilliant promise, but whose career was to be cut short by consumption within five years. George Foxcroft Haskins, born in Boston in 1806, and gradu-

² Cf. Rev. John E. Kealy, "Rev. Dennis Ryan, Missionary and Pastor," *Maine Catholic Historical Review*, VIII, nos. 3-6 (1928), 169-186.

³ Bishop Fenwick to Rev. George Fenwick, S.J., May 11, 1838 (*Fordham Arch.*, 212 P 7).

ated at Harvard in 1826, was ordained to the Protestant Episcopal ministry in 1830. Developing an interest in boy welfare which was later to be so fruitful, he served for some years as chaplain in the Boston House of Correction. In that capacity he met Father Wiley and Bishop Fenwick, and, their influence stimulating what was going on in his own soul, on November 21, 1840, he was received into the Catholic Church. After three years of study in Rome and Paris, he came back to Boston in 1844, ordained as a priest, to begin a career of splendid usefulness, of which much more will be said later on.

Among other new priests who were to make distinguished records in the coming age were: the Rev. Manasses P. Dougherty, a young Irishman ordained for the Diocese in 1842, who for over thirty years was to be closely connected with the upbuilding of the Church in Cambridge; the Rev. Patrick F. Lyndon, another Irishman, who at Saint-Sulpice began a lifelong friendship with the future Bishops Fitzpatrick and Williams, and who came back as a priest to Boston in 1843; Rev. Peter Crudden, ordained in 1844, who for nearly forty years was to be one of the pillars of the Church in Lowell; and Rev. Matthew W. Gibson, of old English Catholic stock, who was to show himself as, next to Father Fitton, the greatest pioneer priest of the Diocese.

II

"In Boston we are sadly off for want of churches," wrote *The Pilot* in 1845; "there is not half enough room for the people. We venture to say that there are hundreds of people who never attend church for the simple reason that they can never procure seats — nay, not even make their way into the House of God, so dense are the multitudes which flock to and around our churches."⁴ Already it was estimated that in the old Puritan capital the four Catholic churches had about as many worshipers on Sundays as all the Protestant churches put together.⁵

Four new churches were provided in rapid succession — and yet they were not enough. To meet the needs of the Ann Street

⁴ June 7, 1845.

⁵ *Pilot*, Feb. 25, 1843.

section (the present North Street) and, in general, of poorer people who could not afford to pay pew rent, a large brick warehouse on Moon Street was purchased early in 1843, and quickly converted into the "free church" of St. John the Baptist, which at once drew a vast congregation. For the swarming community which within ten years had gathered in East Boston, a Congregational meeting-house on the corner of Maverick and Havre Streets (where the Church of the Most Holy Redeemer now stands) was bought for five thousand dollars, and dedicated on February 25, 1844, as the Church of St. Nicholas. This name was chosen in honor of the first pastor, Rev. Nicholas A. J. O'Brien, the schoolmate of Bishop Fitzpatrick at Montreal and Paris, and at that time one of the most prominent younger priests of the Diocese. As St. Augustine's, in South Boston, was "crowded to suffocation,"⁶ the energetic new pastor, Father Terence Fitzsimmons, obtained a site on Broadway and proceeded to erect a new edifice on a scale of magnificence thitherto unparalleled in this region. Built of Quincy granite, in the castellated Gothic style so much admired at that time, crowned by a tower eighty-six feet high, and costing altogether about \$64,000, this Church of SS. Peter and Paul, which was dedicated July 13, 1845, passed as "the best church in the Diocese and one of the finest in the country."⁷ Finally, the German congregation of Boston, which from 1842 onward again had pastors of its own, began in 1840 to raise funds for church-building. With the aid of a gift of \$2,389, obtained by the Bishop from the great Austrian missionary society, the Leopoldine Association, a lot was acquired in 1841 on Suffolk Street (now Shawmut Avenue). Few churches erected during his episcopate cost Bishop Fenwick so much trouble as this one, what with ever-recurring shortages of funds and appeals to him for financial aid, frequent changes of pastor, discord in the congregation, the collapse of the tower when the edifice was half built, etc. At any rate, thanks to his patient and unwearied efforts, the Gothic, stone Church of the Holy Trinity was in use by 1844 and completed by 1846.

⁶ *Memoranda*, July 18, 1841.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Sept. 18, 1848; *Pilot*, July 29, 1843.

There is some evidence to show that Bishop Fenwick in his last years toyed with the thought of building a new and grander Cathedral; but he probably decided that he had neither the funds nor the strength for so great an enterprise.⁸

Scarcely less striking than the progress of Catholicity in Boston was its advance in the adjacent towns.

Cambridge, which had hitherto been a loose union of three discordant villages, Old Cambridge, East Cambridge, and Cambridgeport, was now, through the rise of industry, experiencing the most rapid growth in its history and turning into a city. The foundation of the first Catholic church here was largely due to a zealous convert, Daniel H. Southwick, one of the many former Protestants who were started on the road to Rome by attending the Fenwick-O'Flaherty lectures of 1831 in reply to Dr. Beecher. Soon after he became a Catholic, Southwick began to agitate for the building of a church in East Cambridge, buying a lot for that purpose as early as 1836.⁹ A little later he, with two other converts, John W. Loring and Lawrence B. Watts, leased a former Methodist academy on Fourth Street as a gathering-place for Catholics and in order to form a Sunday school, of which he became superintendent. Finally, at the beginning of 1842, this same group, with equally ardent Catholics of Irish stock, such as William Gleason and James Casey, launched a new movement for a church. At the first public meeting, held at the academy on January 17th, \$3,600 were subscribed.¹⁰ With the Bishop's warm support, a new and better lot was purchased on the east side of Fourth Street,¹¹ and construction was pushed so rapidly that on September 3,

⁸ Father McElroy, S.J., doubtless alluding to talks he had had with Bishop Fenwick the previous summer, wrote to him on Jan. 7, 1843: "This church [the Free Church] being finished, you must turn your attention to your (new) Cathedral, you can and must erect it. . . . No doubt in my mind but your Cathedral, and a splendid one, can be erected in a few years . . . (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*). Cf. also *Daily American Eagle*, Jan. 30, 1846 (the Catholics "contemplate building a magnificent Cathedral of about 200 feet in length and 90 in breadth," to be begun, probably, in the coming summer); *Memoranda*, Sept. 29, 1846.

⁹ *Middlesex Deeds*, book 358, p. 485; Father Tyler's *Diary*, Oct. 15, 1835.

¹⁰ James S. Sullivan (ed.), *The Catholic Church of New England* (Boston and Portland, 1895), p. 528.

¹¹ March 19, 1842 (*Middlesex Deeds*, book 427, p. 558).

1843, St. John's Church was dedicated. A massive stone edifice of the rather prison-like Gothic style then in vogue, it was described as "the largest and finest church in the town of Cambridge."¹² Its first pastors were the later Bishop Fitzpatrick (1842-1844), and then the youthful Father Dougherty, who found in this community the field of his life's work.

In Roxbury, which like Cambridge became a city in 1846 and was growing even more rapidly, a church was urgently needed. A site having been acquired by the Bishop in the spring of 1845, on the eminence known as "Tommy's Rock," Rev. Patrick O'Beirne was in July put in charge of the enterprise, and on September 4th the cornerstone was laid. Thanks to the zeal of pastor and people, St. Joseph's Church was substantially completed the following summer, although dedicated only on December 6th, some months after Bishop Fenwick's death. The new parish included all Roxbury, Dorchester, Brookline, Hyde Park, Dedham, and Norwood. Father O'Beirne for nearly forty years was to remain at the head of it.

In Quincy, which had long been served as a mission of South Boston, Catholic development received a vigorous impetus when Father Fitzsimmons was placed in charge of both places (December, 1840). After at first saying Mass in the West School-house, from which he was for a time ousted by local bigotry, he bought a lot on Cemetery Street, West Quincy, close to the quarries where most of the men in the little congregation worked, and erected a small wooden church with a cupola ("a neat, domicile building," Dr. Fenwick called it), at a cost of four thousand dollars.¹³ On September 18, 1842, the Bishop dedicated St. Mary's Church, with ex-President John Quincy Adams among the spectators. Two years later Quincy began to have its own resident pastors: first, Father O'Beirne, and after his transfer to Roxbury, Father Bernard Carraher. The parish at first embraced Milton, Randolph, Stoughton, Braintree, Weymouth, Hingham, Cohasset, and all the South Shore as far as Plymouth; and it is said that "every Sunday could be

¹² *Massachusetts Spy*, April 19, 1843.

¹³ *Memoranda*, Sept. 18, 1842; *Pilot*, May 21, 1842.

seen people from nearly all these towns in the church yard of St. Mary's." ¹⁴

In Randolph Father Carraher in 1845 began to build a church, which was not completed, however, till four years later. Elsewhere in the wide gap between the Quincy and the Taunton churches he or other priests appear to have made circuit from time to time. There is newspaper evidence that Mass was said, or at least was to be said, by him at South Weymouth on November 16, 1845, and at East Weymouth on December 21st following.¹⁵ At East Abington (Rockland) he is said to have begun periodical visits that same year.¹⁶ The tradition is that the first Mass in North Bridgewater (Brockton) was said by some priest from Boston about 1845.¹⁷ At North Easton, which had already been attended by Father Connolly, of Sandwich, in the early thirties, Father Wiley, of Taunton, gathered fifteen Catholics for Mass in 1840, and services henceforth appear to have been held with some regularity.¹⁸

On the west of the huge Quincy and Roxbury parishes, Waltham was the chief centre of Catholic expansion. This congregation, which was at last growing very notably in numbers, although not in unity and concord, again received a resident pastor in 1842, in the person of the Rev. James Strain. This unfortunate priest, whose ministry in many places was blighted by his mistakes of judgment and by undue hastiness in word and action, deserves, at least, high credit for his restless energy and far-flung activities. During his five years at Waltham he ranged at times from Sandwich and Nantucket on the one side to Fitchburg on the other. At Canton, which had long been a mission either of Waltham or South Boston, he appears to have said Mass regularly in the Stone Factory Chapel. At Randolph, also a station of his until 1845, he bought in 1844 the land on which the church was later built.¹⁹ At Dedham he said the first

¹⁴ *Quincy Monitor*, May, 1886.

¹⁵ Announcements in *The Pilot*, Nov. 8, Dec. 12, 1845.

¹⁶ Sullivan, *The Catholic Church of New England*, p. 728.

¹⁷ *The Catholic Church in New England*, I, 341.

¹⁸ William L. Griffin, *History of the Town of Easton, Massachusetts* (Cambridge, 1886), p. 413.

¹⁹ *Norfolk Deeds*, book 151, p. 153.

Mass in 1843, in the house of a Mr. Slattery, where Memorial Hall now stands, and henceforth he seems to have visited that town periodically.²⁰ In that same year he began occasional services at Norwood (then South Dedham).²¹ In Newton, where Dr. O'Flaherty had said the first Mass for a railroad gang in 1832,²² Father Strain gathered the factory workers at the Upper Falls for worship from about 1844 onward.²³ Watertown, which had ranked as a mission of Waltham since 1837, was probably attended more or less regularly; Concord was similarly ranked by 1845; and Father Strain said Mass at Woburn from 1843 on.²⁴

Turning to the other towns north of Boston, tradition has it that the Holy Sacrifice was first offered in Chelsea by Father O'Brien of East Boston in 1844 at the home of the celebrated convert, Orestes A. Brownson, and after that frequently in the house of Bernard Fanning.²⁵ In Lynn, which had for years been attended monthly from Salem, the Catholics had become so numerous by 1845 that Father O'Flaherty had to procure the Town Hall for services. Encouraged by these developments, Bishop Fenwick in May, 1846, appointed the Rev. Patrick Rattigan as first pastor of Chelsea and Lynn. A few weeks later, however, that ever-unlucky priest had his leg broken by a runaway horse, and the building of churches in these two towns was perforce postponed until the next episcopate.

St. Mary's, Salem, with its missions of Marblehead, Gloucester, and Ipswich, in spite of some seasons of discord waxed

²⁰ Frank Smith, *A History of Dedham, Massachusetts* (Dedham, 1936), pp. 100 ff.

²¹ Sullivan, *The Catholic Church of New England*, p. 681.

²² At least Bishop Fenwick's *Memoranda*, on Sept. 23, 1832, reports that this was to take place on the 28th, and namely at "the Falls" (presumably the Lower Falls).

²³ Henry K. Rowe, *Tercentenary History of Newton, 1630-1930* (Newton, 1830), pp. 217 f.

²⁴ Watertown first appears as a mission of Waltham in the *Catholic Directory* for 1838, and Concord and Woburn in that for 1846. *The Pilot* announces Sunday services at Woburn for May 7, 1843, and April 12, 1846 (issues of April 29, 1843, and April 11, 1846). Cf. D. Hamilton Hurd, *History of Middlesex County, Massachusetts*, I (Philadelphia, 1890), 442.

²⁵ Rev. Michael J. Scanlan, *History of the Parish of St. Rose, Chelsea* (*ibid.*, 1927), pp. 5-6.

steadily in numbers and strength during the pastorates of the Rev. John D. Brady, Rev. James Strain (1841-1842), Dr. O'Flaherty (1842-1846), and the excellent Father James Conway, who came here in June, 1846, to pass the rest of his busy priestly life.

Lowell by 1841 had nearly four thousand Catholics — doubtless the largest number to be found in any place outside Boston.²⁶ While Father McDermott, the pastor, and a part of the congregation were against a division of the parish, the people living in the Chapel Hill section and Father Conway, then assistant pastor, desired to form a second church. Coming up to give Confirmation and to adjust this dispute, the Bishop decided in favor of the project; and at an enthusiastic parish meeting called by him, Father Conway was put in charge of the enterprise and fifty-four hundred dollars was subscribed on the spot.²⁷ Immediately afterwards a lot was obtained on the corner of Gorham and Appleton Streets, and a year later, on October 16, 1842, the new St. Peter's Church was dedicated — a plain brick edifice, capable of holding fifteen hundred people and erected at a cost of twenty-two thousand dollars.²⁸ Father Conway remained at the head of a singularly harmonious and loyal congregation until 1846, when he was succeeded by the young Father Crudden, who was to spend here the remainder of his long and fruitful career.

Even two churches were not enough. Father McDermott, of St. Patrick's, presently convinced himself that a third one was needed. For that purpose he bought, just before Bishop Fenwick's death, a large Methodist meeting-house on Suffolk Street, which became St. Mary's Church.

Meanwhile, another great centre of the textile industry was springing up with amazing rapidity a little farther down the Merrimac River, at Lawrence. This was the creation of the same group of Boston capitalists who controlled the mills of Lowell and who were bent on reduplicating, if possible, the marvelous success of Lowell. Beginning with March 20, 1845,

²⁶ *Memoranda*, July 25, 1841.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, Oct. 16, 1842; Sullivan, *The Catholic Church of New England*, p. 322.

when the Essex Company (headed by Samuel Lawrence) was incorporated, a whirlwind of activity swept the erstwhile peaceful countryside. The most massive stone dam in the country was thrown across the river. Canals, mills, streets, houses were being constructed. Workingmen and other settlers gathered so rapidly that where early in 1845 there had been but two hundred inhabitants, by 1848 there were six thousand.²⁹ By April 17, 1847, the Town of Lawrence was incorporated.

Catholics from the start were very numerous among the settlers. Father McDermott, of Lowell, soon began to visit them, saying the first Mass there in December, 1845. But a resident priest was needed, and, curiously enough, the organization of the Church in this youngest of New England boom towns devolved upon the seventy-one-year-old veteran, Father Charles D. Ffrench. Readmitted to the Diocese in the spring of 1846, after eight years' absence, he was soon allowed or commissioned to go to Lawrence, where he began a ministry that lasted nearly five years. After having built the first Catholic churches in Portland, Eastport, and Dover, it was thus vouchsafed to him, in the evening of his stormy but valiant life, to become the founder of the Church in Lawrence.

III

Vermont, according to Bishop Fenwick's computations, possessed in the early forties about five thousand Catholics — slightly more than any other State in New England save Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Because of their diffusion, however, very few new churches yet arose in the Green Mountain State, and Fathers O'Callaghan and Daly still had to continue their toilsome circuits around a large number of tiny congregations.

After the burning of St. Mary's, Burlington, Father O'Callaghan, by dint of three years of strenuous efforts, succeeded in building a new and statelier edifice, which was dedicated by Bishop Fenwick, under the name of St. Peter's, on October 31,

²⁹ Maurice B. Dorgan, *History of Lawrence, Massachusetts* (*ibid.*, 1924), p. 44.

1841. This time the church was located, no longer in the outskirts, but in the heart of the town, in a district so respectable and in such close proximity to the leading Protestant churches that incendiaries might hesitate to start a conflagration. Inspired by this achievement, the French-Canadians now renewed old projects of securing a pastor of their own race and building a church for themselves. Early in 1842 the Abbé Ancé, whom Bishop Fenwick had procured from Montreal, arrived to serve them, and it appears that under his leadership a chapel was erected near the spot where St. Mary's had stood. If so, this would represent the first Franco-Canadian church established in the Diocese of Boston.³⁰ Unfortunately, however, Father Ancé turned out to be so incompetent a pastor that before the end of 1843 he was dismissed from the Diocese. From that time down to 1850 the Canadians of Burlington had no more priests of their own; and apparently their chapel was sold.

Next to Burlington, the largest agglomeration of Catholics in the State was in the district of St. Albans, Swanton, and Fairfield, where the Bishop in 1841 estimated them — rather optimistically, perhaps — at two thousand.³¹ Nevertheless, in spite of several attempts and the real zeal shown by certain individuals, no church-building could yet get started here.

In southern Vermont Father Daly in 1839-1840 erected a fair-sized brick church at Middlebury, at the cost of endless toil and worry and by advancing much of the money required out of his own scanty savings. Much light is thrown upon the range of his other activities by a report that has happened to be preserved of the missions attended by him between June 1, 1837, and November 1, 1840.³² His list includes twenty-seven stations, in three States. In Vermont he had not only kept up the

³⁰ That such a church was built is not alluded to in the *Catholic Directories* of the time or by most writers on this field; but, apart from some other evidence, it was asserted repeatedly by Bishop de Goësbriand, who, settling in Burlington only about a dozen years later, may be presumed to have known the facts. Cf. his statements in Abby Maria Hemenway (ed.), *The Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, I (Burlington, 1867), 550 f., and in W. S. Rann (ed.), *History of Chittenden County, Vermont* (Syracuse, 1886), pp. 183 f.

³¹ *Memoranda*, Oct. 5.

³² *Ibid.*, Dec. 17, 1840.

missions started by Father O'Callaghan at Pittsford, Castleton, Rutland, etc., but had added many new ones, such as Manchester, Bellows Falls, Plymouth, Norwich, Windsor, and Woodstock. In Massachusetts he was serving North Adams and Greenfield. In New Hampshire he had stations at Claremont, Cornish, Charlestown, Lebanon, Hanover, and Keene. Yet for all these missions together he estimated only 1331 Catholics, and in most of them his flock numbered only twenty to thirty.

Of special interest in the next few years was his increasing penetration of New Hampshire. As railroad construction gangs multiplied, as industry sprang up here and there, and a few larger towns were developed, even the Granite State was no longer to remain what most of it had hitherto seemed — a kind of Forbidden Land to Catholics. In October, 1841, at the Bishop's injunction, Father Daly visited Concord, and said what was probably the first Mass in the New Hampshire capital, before a congregation of thirteen persons.³³ It is uncertain how early he began to go to Manchester, whose spectacular rise as a textile centre may be dated from 1839, when the Amoskeag Manufacturing Company commenced operations. The Bishop's journal records that in May, 1844, the missionary arrived in Boston and gave notice that "Manchester, a town thirty miles north of Lowell, is likely to become a great manufacturing place, and will soon want a Catholic church from the number of Catholics already congregating there."³⁴ Probably he was told to attend the place as regularly as he could; and that he seems to have done, at least from that time onward. There is a story that on one occasion, when he was celebrating Mass in a hall at Manchester, the floor gave way, precipitating priest, altar, and congregation into the cellar — a mischance due to a plot or a pleasantry of some Native Americans, who had cut the floor joists the day before.³⁵ Father Daly is also reported to have visited Lakeport and Laconia from 1845 on, and Lancaster, far up in northern New Hampshire, from 1844.³⁶ In short, by this time his incessant journeys were apparently carrying him periodically over the greater part of the State.

³³ *Pilot*, Nov. 13, 1841.

³⁴ *Memoranda*, May 14.

³⁵ *The Catholic Church in New England*, I, 615.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 651 f.

Of Father Canavan's quiet and slowly progressing congregations at Dover and the missions attached to it, the only new development that need be noticed here is that in 1843 the Catholics of Newburyport (Massachusetts) purchased the chapel of the South Congregational Church, which, after being moved to another site, was transformed into "St. Mary's Church." The requests of that flock for a resident pastor could not, however, be satisfied during Bishop Fenwick's episcopate.

IV

In Maine the record of these years shows some advances and some disappointments.

At Augusta, during the business depression that prevailed after 1837, the Catholics remained for seven years without a resident pastor (save for one brief interval), and it is uncertain whether they were able to retain the use of the church which they had taken over from the Unitarians.³⁷ With the return of better times, however, in 1845, they again began to have resident priests. The first of these, the Rev. Dr. Richard A. Wilson, bought a lot more conveniently located — on State Street, on the West Side — and prepared to build a new church,³⁸ although his transfer to Taunton in May, 1846, delayed that enterprise until the following year.

At Bangor, Father Michael Lynch was replaced in 1839 by Father Thomas O'Sullivan, who during fourteen years of devoted service did much to enlarge and adorn the church and to build up what was then the strongest parish in Maine.

St. Joseph's, Eastport, was also blessed with unusually active

³⁷ It has been asserted in the *History of the Catholic Church in the New England States*, I, 510, and in the *Sacred Heart Review*, XVI (1896), no. 10, ill. suppl., p. 2, that the Bethlehem Church, acquired by Father Ryan in 1836, passed back into the hands of the Unitarians within a few years because the Catholics were unable to pay off the debt on it. On the other hand, both these accounts of the early Catholic history of Augusta are bristling with errors: this may be another. The *Catholic Directories* of the time would seem to imply that the church remained in Catholic hands until 1845, and so — quite clearly — does James W. North, *The History of Augusta from the Earliest Settlement to the Present Time* (*ibid.*, 1870), p. 583.

³⁸ *Memoranda*, Feb. 28, 1846.

pastors: the Rev. Dr. John B. McMahon (1840-1842), Father Bernard Carraher (1843-1845), and Father John Boyce (1845-1847). These priests not only invigorated what had been a feeble and neglected parish, but strewed Washington County with mission stations. A church was built at West Machias in 1845-1846; another was begun at Trescott (West Lubec) about the same time; a third was planned for Calais, although it does not seem to have been erected in Bishop Fenwick's lifetime.³⁹

Elsewhere two other new churches arose. At Ellsworth the fifty to sixty Catholics in 1843 bought a small building which they converted into a place of worship.⁴⁰ The construction of a church at Houlton in 1844-1845 by Father William Moran, the energetic pastor of Benedicta, marked the advance of English-speaking Catholicism into the great potato empire of the Aroostook. Still further north were the Franco-Canadian settlements of Madawaska, part of which — including two churches — lay within the disputed area assigned by the Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842 to the United States and to Maine. Whether or not these churches were to be considered as belonging henceforth to the Diocese of Boston remained for years an uncertain question, but Bishop Fenwick seems never to have exercised any jurisdiction over them.

Less encouraging were the developments of these years at Benedicta and among the two tribes of Indians.

Bishop Fenwick's enthusiasm for his paradise on the Moluncus remained at its height through 1839 and 1840. In both these years he spent many weeks at Benedicta, pressing the construction of the dam, the sawmill, the building for the future college and seminary, dreaming of making this spot the educational centre of his Diocese, and of seeing here a "thriving colony of several thousands, without any mixture of Protestants."⁴¹ The "Irish Settlement in Maine" was at that time

³⁹ The *Catholic Directories* from 1845 on refer to "the new church in Calais," but Bishop Fitzpatrick, visiting that place in 1847, reported that there was no church there (*Memoranda*, Sept. 1, 1847).

⁴⁰ Father O'Sullivan to Bishop Fenwick, Jan. 12, 1843 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁴¹ Letter to Bishop Rosati, July 31, 1839 (*Ill. Cath. Hist. Rev.*, X [1927-1928], 160 f.).

rather famous. An Austrian diplomat, who visited it in 1840, was loud in his praises of the site, the soil, the sober, industrious, and prosperous people, and the conscientious and skillful management by the Bishop, although he had doubts as to the wisdom of segregating Catholics in this fashion.⁴² The British consul in Boston declared that this was likely to become a model for all such establishments, and that it was an example which, it was to be hoped, would be extensively followed in the various States of the Union.⁴³

But the great plans for Benedicta proved rather short-lived. In 1841 business prevented Bishop Fenwick from visiting it, and the next year he became involved in negotiations with the Jesuits which, as will be narrated later, led by 1843 to the decision to found his college at Worcester (Massachusetts). Henceforth his interest in Benedicta waned. He attended, of course, to the religious and material needs of the colony, as far as that depended on him; but he never visited it again, he made no further attempts to attract new settlers, and the subject almost drops out of his journal and correspondence.

Nevertheless, while the Benedicta experiment fell very far short of the results intended, it was by no means a failure. From it originated a community which, a century later, is still wholly Catholic and which, in all that regards the solid well-being and high moral character of its people, has amply fulfilled the hopes of its founder. A community which, apparently, has always got along without saloons, jails, crime, debts, graft, lawyers, or divorces, and in which, while no one is really rich and no one really poor, everybody seems to be in comfortable circumstances — it is no wonder that Benedicta has been held up as the most successful colony ever founded in Maine and as a kind of Catholic rural Utopia.⁴⁴

Among the Indians, in the years under survey here, Bishop

⁴² Herr von Hülseman to Baron von Mareschal, Sept. 30, 1840 (*Library of Congress, Transcript from Haus-Hof-und Staatsarchiv, Vienna*).

⁴³ T. C. Grattan, *Civilised America*, II (2nd ed.: London, 1859), 34 f. (referring back to observations of about 1841).

⁴⁴ Cf. the long and interesting descriptions of the place in *Boston Sunday Globe*, Nov. 10, 1929; *Boston Sunday Herald*, June 30, 1907.

Fenwick encountered many difficulties. In the first place, both tribes were rent by quarrels and schisms. The trouble started among the Penobscots in 1838, when one part of the tribe, exasperated by what they considered the crimes and abuses perpetrated by Governor John Aitteon and the Lieutenant-Governor, John Neptune, attempted to depose them and to elect new chiefs, despite the ancient rule that the tribal officers held power for life. The adherents of this rather revolutionary movement styled themselves "the New Party," while an "Old Party" sustained the cause of the "lawful" authorities. More or less by way of imitation, a similar division then developed among the Passamaquoddies. Henceforth for many years to come each tribe was to have two rival governments, endless disputes and bitterness, and not a few serious combats. While the Bishop and his missionaries attempted to maintain neutrality as between these factions and made many fruitless efforts to restore peace and concord, the new situation hampered their work in many respects, especially among the Penobscots, where the Old Party tried to secure State support by intriguing with the Protestants and affecting an anti-clerical attitude.

A second difficulty arose from the fact that, since the Indians had almost no money in their own hands — but plenty of money belonging to them, which was administered by the State — it was very difficult to maintain resident priests among them without subsidies from the Maine authorities. At Augusta prejudice against "Romanism" was usually very strong. For the less well-endowed Passamaquoddies no grants for a priest could then be obtained. For the amply endowed Penobscots, it was not quite so easy to refuse. The grant of two hundred dollars a year for a missionary at Old Town, accorded in 1838, was suddenly withdrawn in 1840. In 1843, however, when there happened to be a Catholic Governor (Edward Kavanagh), a more liberal spirit returned, to the extent that the Executive Council voted three hundred dollars a year for the instruction of the Penobscots, although this sum was to be divided between the Catholic priest and a school-teacher who, it was evidently hoped, would be a Protestant.

A third difficulty was that it was far from easy for Bishop Fenwick, harassed as he was from every side with calls for a priest from swarming white congregations, to find missionaries who could be spared for the Indians, or who were fitted for, and willing to endure the privations of, that difficult kind of work. Among the Passamaquoddies Father Demillier stuck to his post heroically until his death on July 23, 1843, after which the tribe was attended only by the pastors of Eastport. Among the Penobscots Father Edward Murphy, who had made so excellent a beginning in 1838, had to be recalled, in December, 1839, for more urgent duties elsewhere. After that Bishop Fenwick was never able to find priests who could or would remain long as resident pastors of that tribe. During most of the time from 1840 to 1846 the Penobscots were attended, usually on alternate Sundays, by Father O'Sullivan, of Bangor, while the State of Maine got off, from 1843 onward, with a payment to him of fifty dollars a year. As far as secular education was concerned, he and the pastors of the Passamaquoddies seem to have kept up schools as best they were able, for which service the Federal Government, down to the end of the Fenwick era, continued to pay one hundred dollars for the one tribe and two hundred dollars for the other.

V

In southeastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island the distribution of forces early in 1839 was: Father Wiley at Taunton, Father Corry serving Providence and Pawtucket, and Father James O'Reilly replacing Father Lee in charge of Newport, Fall River, New Bedford, Wareham, and Sandwich.

At Taunton, where economic prosperity was returning in the early forties, the church progressed on the whole very satisfactorily under Fathers Wiley (till 1842), Dennis Ryan (who around this period sought a change from his Maine missions for a couple of years), John O'Beirne (end of 1842-1846), and Richard A. Wilson.

But among Father O'Reilly's numerous missions Fall River

alone showed marked and rapid growth. As one new company or mill after another arose there, Catholics streamed in, and by 1841 Bishop Fenwick estimated the congregation as exceeding one thousand souls.⁴⁵ Already in November, 1839, therefore, this place was detached from Father O'Reilly's circuit and began to have its own resident pastors. The first of these, Rev. Richard B. Hardey, an old Maryland friend of the Bishop's, stayed only till April, 1840, when he was called to the Cathedral; but his successor, Edward Murphy, was to remain for a lifetime (down to his death in 1887), and was to be *the* great builder of the Church in what is now virtually a Catholic city. This vigorous young pastor quickly set out to enlarge the Church of St. John the Baptist, which Father Corry had finished only three years before and which the Bishop had dedicated on August 30, 1840. With the generous aid of the men of the congregation, who, hard as they doubtless toiled during the day, turned out in shifts at night to labor at the church, the little edifice was substantially lengthened and equipped with a basement, sacristy, and a lodging for the priest. Within a few years more a new enlargement was required, and by the end of this period it was plain that nothing but a new church would meet the needs of the teeming congregation of Fall River.

The missions left to Father O'Reilly had a less cheerful story. At Newport, his usual residence, matters did progress smoothly until in 1842 the works that had so long been carried on at Fort Adams were discontinued, and the hundreds of Catholic laborers who had been the backbone of the congregation were scattered to the winds. After that, with his income from this church cut to eighty dollars a year,⁴⁶ and with little to be expected from his other small and impecunious flocks, Father O'Reilly was in sore straits until in March, 1844, he managed to get himself transferred to Boston.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ *Memoranda*, Aug. 8

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, Sept. 12, 1842.

⁴⁷ The statement made by Father Fitton (*Sketches*, p. 215) and in the *History of the Catholic Church in the New England States*, I, 415, that Father O'Reilly abandoned Newport in 1842 and that that fallen place remained without a priest for the next two years seems erroneous. Father O'Reilly appears to have resided there until in November, 1843, the Bishop ordered him to go and live,

Father Patrick Byrne succeeded him at New Bedford, where Bishop Fenwick, giving Confirmation for the first time in 1841, had found but two hundred and fifty Catholics and had formed most dismal impressions.⁴⁸ Under Father Byrne — the first resident pastor — and his successor, Rev. James Maguire (January, 1845, to March, 1846), there were few signs of improvement and some distressing incidents. It was only under Father Thomas R. McNulty (March, 1846, to December, 1853) that rapid progress began here, and this Bishop Fenwick did not live to see.

At Sandwich, Wareham, and Nantucket, also, matters remained in bleak condition.⁴⁹

A much more enlivening picture was the growth of the Church in the industrial centres of Rhode Island.

At Providence the first church (SS. Peter and Paul's) had scarcely been finished three years when, early in 1841, a movement was launched for a second one, the demand coming chiefly from the residents in the northern part of the city. Father Corry, still struggling with the debt already incurred, was sternly opposed to the project, but Bishop Fenwick, both by letters and by a personal visit, lent it every encouragement. Hence on April 20th a lot, inspected and approved by him, was bought in the Smith's Hill section and fronting on State Street (not very far from the present State Capitol).⁵⁰ The cornerstone was laid July 13th, and a year later, on July 3, 1842, Bishop Fenwick dedicated St. Patrick's Church and Bishop Hughes of New York preached. While considerably smaller than SS. Peter and Paul's, the new church — another example of castellated Gothic — must have been even more

for economy's sake, with Father Murphy at Fall River, and there is reason to think that he continued to attend Newport, like his other missions, until March, 1844.

⁴⁸ *Memoranda*, Aug. 14-15, 1841.

⁴⁹ Since the existing accounts of the Sandwich parish are extremely vague about these years, it may be noted here that this church was attended at intervals by: Father O'Reilly, of Newport (1839-1841); Father James Strain, first from Salem, then from Waltham (1841-1842); Father John O'Beirne, of Taunton (1842-1845); Father Crudden, of Saxonville (Nov. 1845, to April, 1846); and it was then reattached to the New Bedford mission.

⁵⁰ *Providence Land Deeds*, book 77, p. 362.

magnificent, according to the standards of the day; and, built so much more quickly and easily and at a much higher cost, it demonstrated the increasing strength and affluence of the Providence Catholics. Father William Wiley, transferred from Taunton in January, 1842, became the first pastor.

Father Corry, whose opposition to the new church seems to have brought him into somewhat strained relations with the Bishop, remained at "the old church" until September, 1843, when he obtained an Exeat from the Diocese. Unwearied by thirteen years of intense labor and by building four churches, the sturdy though sometimes too self-willed veteran then went out to the wilderness of Arkansas to help build up the infant Diocese of Little Rock, and after five years there came back to New York State, where, as pastor of Greenbush (now Rensselaer), he died in 1866. At Providence his immediate successor was Father Fitton, called from Worcester to handle a congregation which at first did not take easily the loss of Father Corry.

Pawtucket, where, with the revival of business, Catholics were again increasing rapidly, began in 1841 to have its own pastors, who were also charged with the growing mission of Woonsocket. At the latter place land was bought in 1842, on which in the next two years there was built the fifth church in Rhode Island.

Connecticut, hitherto rather backward in its industrial development, began around the year 1840, "with an abruptness rare in economic history,"⁵¹ to transform itself into a great manufacturing commonwealth. For "the Church of the immigrant" the results were bound to be auspicious, although the main harvest came after the State had been detached from the Diocese of Boston. At any rate, several new foundations marked the years just before that separation.

At Bridgeport, Father Smyth, of New Haven, in 1841 built a handsome brick church, which Bishop Fenwick dedicated on

⁵¹ Clive Day, *The Rise of Manufacturing in Connecticut, 1820-1850* (Tercenary Commemoration of the State of Connecticut, Committee on Historical Publications, XLIV, New Haven, 1935), p. 2.

July 24th of the following year (St. James'). Father Michael Lynch, formerly of Bangor, became its first pastor, serving also the missions of Derby and Norwalk. At Middletown, Father Brady, of Hartford, erected another brick church in 1843. At New London, then a bigoted place where Father Fitton found it no uncommon experience to be hooted and even stoned by the street urchins, that tireless missionary put up in that same year a small wooden church, happily wedged in between two Protestant homes which, it was hoped, would reduce the fire hazards.⁵² Early in 1844 he also began a church in Norwich. New Britain, Meriden, and Stamford were among the new mission stations added to the many others started in the preceding period.

VI

Nowhere else was Catholic progress more conspicuous in Bishop Fenwick's last years than in western and central Massachusetts — the domain opened up by Father Fitton's pioneering labors a decade before.

As matters stood in 1839, there was not a church or chapel in the State anywhere west of Worcester. There were but two priests: Father Fitton, who, it will be recalled, was charged with the missions of Worcester, Hampshire, and Franklin Counties, and Father John Brady, who from Hartford served those of Hampden and Berkshire Counties. The latter priest in 1841 obtained as an assistant his near-namesake, Rev. John D. Brady, formerly pastor at Salem, who from the outset devoted his attention chiefly to the Massachusetts missions dependent upon Hartford, and who in the spring of 1842 was placed in independent charge of them, with the title of pastor of Cabotville. To this sphere of operations Hampshire and Franklin Counties were added about the beginning of 1844, after Father Fitton had removed to Providence. In October, 1845, "Father John D." received as an assistant the Rev. Bernard O'Cavanagh — the priest who had been the first pastor of Hartford, and who,

⁵² *Sketches*, pp. 204 f.

after serving in the Dioceses of Cincinnati and Detroit and passing some time in Europe, now returned to the diocese for which he was ordained.

All these priests showed themselves extremely active in maintaining and adding to the mission stations which Father Fitton had started and in following up the railroad gangs, who in those years were numerous in the western counties of Massachusetts. Westfield, Lenox, Stockbridge, Dalton, Lee, Egremont, Great Barrington, and South Adams are but some of the stations that were more or less regularly attended, and which illustrate how Catholicism was penetrating the Berkshire valleys. But the main effort of the time was in church-building.

Father John Brady began it at Cabotville, where, on a lot purchased July 17, 1839,⁵³ he erected in the next two years St. Matthew's Church, which the Bishop dedicated on October 1, 1843. Although when this church was begun there were thought to be only about two hundred and fifty Catholics in the neighborhood,⁵⁴ by the time it was finished it was found to be not nearly large enough: on wintry days many worshipers had to kneel outside in the snow. Father John D. Brady, therefore, urged on by Bishop Fenwick, decided to build a church at Springfield and others at Pittsfield and Northampton.⁵⁵

Pittsfield had been attended at least once a year by Father O'Callaghan, of Burlington, from 1835 to 1839, and from 1841 Father John D. Brady began regular visits. The congregation, which at first could easily be gathered in one room of a private house, now needed larger accommodations, but it was sometimes not easy to secure them because of local bigotry. A man named Pomeroy, who for two years granted the use of a building near the freight depot free of charge, was warned by fellow townsmen to stop this practice. When Father Brady came to hold services on April 28, 1844, he found that, as an indignant member of his flock wrote the next day: "The prejudice of a few in Pittsfield prevented us from getting either a school-room,

⁵³ *Hampden Deeds*, book 108, p. 554.

⁵⁴ *Memoranda*, June 22, 1841.

⁵⁵ J. D. Brady to Bishop Fenwick, March 2, 1843 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*); *Pilot*, June 1, 1844.

hall, or any other covered place, for love or money, in which we could adore God." The congregation of two hundred had to squeeze themselves as best they could into the small house of an Irishman, where Mass was celebrated, after which "the reverend gentleman addressed the assembled multitude from a chair on the open field." ⁵⁶

Taught by such experiences, both pastor and people were eager to build. Already on February 12, 1844, Father Brady had bought a lot on Melville Street, where the Church of Notre Dame now stands; and here by the early part of 1845 Pittsfield's first church was finished.⁵⁷

At Northampton during Father Fitton's time the slowly growing congregation appears to have worshiped at the Foley house or in the room over the Indelible Pencil shop at Straw Hollow. On October 11, 1842, there was purchased an excellent and centrally located lot on King Street, for which Father Fitton had contracted the year before.⁵⁸ As soon as Father Brady took charge, a collection for building purposes was started ⁵⁹ and by the beginning of 1846 St. Mary's Church was completed.

The Springfield problem was not solved quite so easily. Early in 1843, it is true, one thousand to fifteen hundred dollars had been subscribed by the local Catholics, and on November 25th a lot was bought on Prospect Street for three hundred dollars from Charles Stearns, one of the foremost figures in the business and political life of Springfield at that time.⁶⁰ This lot was part of a large block of property which Stearns had acquired just to the west of the United States Armory, and Prospect Street (not the present street of that name) was a road which

⁵⁶ Letter of April 29 from Pittsfield (*Pilot*, June 1, 1844).

⁵⁷ *Memoranda*, Jan. 15, 1845 ("nearly completed").

⁵⁸ *Hampshire Deeds*, book 92, p. 165 (the preliminary contract of April 20, 1841); book 97, p. 62 (the final purchase). Father Fitton's statement in his *Sketches*, pp. 323 f., that he secured the lot on which the church was later built as early as 1834 seems to be another case of faulty memory.

⁵⁹ The list of the original fifty-eight contributors towards the Northampton church is printed in the *History of the Catholic Church in the New England States*, II, 729.

⁶⁰ *Hampden Deeds*, book 124, p. 251.

he had opened up parallel to the armory's west wall. The Catholics, who had planned to begin building in 1844, were unable to do so for lack of funds. In January, 1845, a strange interlude occurred. A United States engineer, surveying the armory grounds, found that Prospect Street belonged to them. Colonel J. W. Ripley, the Superintendent — then engaged in a bitter personal feud with Stearns — at once asserted the Government's alleged rights by putting up sheds in the middle of the street, directly in front of the Catholic lot. If the only thoroughfare leading to it were barred in this way, that lot would be valueless. The Catholics turned for redress to the man from whom they had bought the property. Stearns, accompanied by some workmen, went to the spot and removed the obstructions in the street, after a hot verbal battle with a United States marshal. Soon after, he was arrested and taken to Boston to be tried before a criminal court for rioting. Although he was acquitted on this charge, in the long-drawn-out litigation that followed over the title to the contested property, he was in the end beaten.

Foreseeing this outcome, the Catholics had meantime entered into negotiation with Colonel Ripley, who was disposed to be generous to them in order to make up for the trouble he had caused them. Hence, on the occasion of the Bishop's visit to Springfield, on October 15, 1845, the Prospect Street lot was sold to the United States at an advance in price — for four hundred dollars.⁶¹

The congregation at this time were worshipping in a hall, and in September an energetic young priest had been appointed the first Catholic pastor of the town, the Rev. George T. Rioridan. On May 18, 1846, he purchased for one thousand dollars a lot on Chestnut Street,⁶² near the present main railway station,

⁶¹ Probably the best account of this locally famous incident is that of Mason A. Green, *Springfield, 1636-1886: History of the Town and City* (*ibid.*, 1888), pp. 451 ff. Cf. also Edward A. Hall, "Lot Once Owned by the Catholics, and Now a Part of the Armory Grounds," *Conn. Valley Hist. Soc. Papers and Proceedings*, IV (1907), 217 ff.; and Stearns' own account in *The National Armories* . . . (2nd ed.: Springfield, 1852).

⁶² *Hampden Deeds*, book 134, p. 396.

where he prepared to build. Springfield then got its long-delayed church with unexpected quickness when, by a new reversal of plans, Father Riordan bought up a Baptist meeting-house; but this dénouement came two months after Bishop Fenwick's death. It may be noted that this new church was named St. Benedict's in honor of the late Bishop — and fittingly, since he for fourteen years had hoped and labored for the establishment of a church in Springfield.

In Central Massachusetts the Worcester congregation grew by leaps and bounds. By 1845 Bishop Fenwick estimated it at fifteen hundred persons (including seven hundred French-Canadians), and therefore as one of the largest in the Diocese — and that in a city where eleven years before there had scarcely been twenty Catholics.⁶³ As long as Father Fitton remained in charge, everything went prosperously. His successor, the Rev. Adolphus Williamson (October 13, 1843, to April 2, 1845), came of a wealthy Catholic family of Baltimore, had received his priestly training in Rome, and had served four years at the Boston Cathedral. Talented, learned, and zealous, he was, unfortunately, in such broken health that his ministry in Worcester does not seem to have been very effective, and within a few weeks after resigning from this mission, he died. In his place the Bishop appointed the Rev. Matthew Gibson, a priest from the Diocese of Philadelphia, who, having come to Holy Cross College with the idea of joining the Jesuits, had changed his mind and solicited admission among the secular clergy of the Diocese.

The new pastor faced serious difficulties at the outset. The Irish part of the congregation were far from pleased at having an English-born priest set over them. Under the somewhat lax régime of Father Williamson ideas had become rife of establishing laymen's control over the finances of the parish: that is, the trustee system. For a few weeks there was grave discord, culminating when some of the wilder spirits locked Father Gibson out of the priest's rooms and he appealed to the Bishop to come and "quell their rebellious actions." On April 20th

⁶³ *Memoranda*, April 20, 1845.

Bishop Fenwick came and with his usual tact and eloquence allayed the conflict — the more easily, perhaps, inasmuch as most of the people were already ashamed of what had happened. Although the opposition was by no means extinct, henceforth matters proceeded for a while in relatively harmonious fashion.⁶⁴

The immediate practical problem was that of a new church. The existing one, although dedicated only four years before, could scarcely accommodate half the people who thronged it. As a result of the Bishop's visit, the congregation agreed to build a new edifice; and the committee of twelve elected by them to assist in the enterprise, although taking to themselves the ill-omened name of "trustees," in fact coöperated with Father Gibson very loyally and effectively. Pastor and people made a magnificent effort — perhaps too ambitious a one, for the debt incurred was to be an incubus on the parish for years. At any rate, on June 24, 1846, Bishop Fitzpatrick (then Coadjutor), in the presence of Bishop Fenwick and thirty-one priests, dedicated the for that time splendid Doric Church of St. John the Evangelist — an edifice four times the size of Father Fitton's little church, and almost as large as the Boston Cathedral.

The widely ramifying missions attached to Worcester were, of course, maintained with unflagging energy by Father Fitton until his removal to Providence, and were attended by Father Williamson as far as his failing strength permitted. Father Gibson renewed them with a zeal and activity equal to Father Fitton's, although within a reduced sphere, since his field of operations included only Worcester County and the western parts of Middlesex. Two new developments of interest are to be noted here. The first is the growth of Catholic congregations around the border between the two counties just named, in such places as Saxonville, Framingham Centre, Natick, Hol-

⁶⁴ These troubles in the Worcester church are described in great detail by Father McCoy in the *History of the Catholic Church in the New England States*, II, 837 ff. His source was the already mentioned notebooks of Richard O'Flynn, which, containing the minutes of the various parish and committee meetings held in Worcester during these years, afford such glimpses as one can rarely get into the life of a Catholic congregation at that time.

liston, Milford, Clinton, and Stow. One of these congregations, that of Saxonville (in the town of Framingham), was by 1844 ready to begin building a church (St. George's), and next year received a resident pastor. The second point to be noticed is the dawn of Catholic activity in the more northerly towns of Worcester County, where, with the building of the Fitchburg Railroad and its continuation westward, Catholics first appeared in some numbers around the years 1844-1846. It is a disputed question whether the first Mass in Fitchburg was said by Father Gibson or Father Strain, from Waltham, and whether the date of it was 1844 or 1845.⁶⁵ At any rate, that town became one of Father Gibson's mission stations, as did Athol, Westminster, Royalston, etc. These humble beginnings mark the extension of the Church into one of the last sections of New England that had hitherto remained untouched by it.

VII

By the beginning of 1843 the Diocese of Boston had thirty-six priests, thirty-eight churches, and an estimated Catholic population of about sixty-eight thousand. According to some statistics prepared by Bishop Fenwick around that time, this population was distributed as follows:

Maine	4,361
New Hampshire.....	1,064
Vermont	4,940
Massachusetts	47,941
Rhode Island	5,074
Connecticut	4,753

68,133 ⁶⁶

The Diocese having grown to such considerable proportions, and he himself having borne for nearly eighteen years the care of all the rapidly multiplying churches throughout New England, it is not strange that by that spring, at the latest, he had

⁶⁵ Cf. *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 763.

⁶⁶ *Memoranda*, Feb. 14, 1843.

reached two important conclusions. One was that the Diocese ought to be divided, as had already happened to nearly all the other older dioceses of the country. The second was that he ought to obtain a coadjutor, both in order to provide for the succession and in order to lighten his own burdens.

If the Diocese was to be divided, that could, obviously, be done by detaching from it either the three states north of Massachusetts or the two states south of it. The northern states then contained slightly more Catholics, but the prospects for future growth were far better in the two southern states. Hence — while we have no means of knowing Bishop Fenwick's train of thought on the subject — he was doubtless wise in deciding that the first new diocese to be carved out in New England ought to consist of Rhode Island and Connecticut. As to why he concluded that Hartford, rather than Providence — which had a much larger Catholic population — should be the see city, it is much more difficult to conjecture. For the bishop of the diocese to be created, his candidate was Father William Tyler — the gentle, humble, saintly Tyler who, almost from the moment of ordination, had been his favorite companion and constant associate, but who in talents was not equal to the brilliant younger man for whom the succession in Boston was reserved.

The question of a coadjutor had evidently been upon the Bishop's mind from at least 1837 onward. In that year he had for a time been eager to secure, in that capacity, an English-born Sulpician, of Montreal, Father John Larkin, with whom he had formed very friendly relations.⁶⁷ Finding insuperable obstacles to this project, the Bishop for six years took no further steps in the matter. But that he was thinking of it appears from an intimate letter to his friend, Archbishop Eccleston, of Baltimore, in which he wrote: "As it is so easy a matter to obtain what one desires, do you not think that you and I ought to look about us for Coadjutors, too? You are getting feeble (so at least they tell me) and I am getting both old and feeble too.

⁶⁷ Bishop Fenwick to Archbishop Eccleston, Dec. 12, 1837 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 24 U 6).

If I had a Coadjutor I would have time to relax a little. I would not have such hard work as I have now. . . ." ⁶⁸ It is likely that his candidate of two years later was already selected: the most incomparably talented of his priests, who, young as he was, had ever since returning from Paris in 1840 received constant signs of his special confidence and esteem, the Rev. John B. Fitzpatrick.

At the Fifth Provincial Council of Baltimore (May 13-21, 1843), Bishop Fenwick presented his proposals, which were accepted by his fellow bishops. The Holy See gave its sanction, although the Congregation of Propaganda hesitated at approving a coadjutor who had been ordained a priest only three years. The news was known in Boston by November, through bishops returning from Rome, and Father Tyler, in consternation at being raised to so august a dignity, was prostrated with fever for two months. In February, 1844, the long-awaited bulls at last arrived. On March 17th, in the Cathedral at Baltimore, Bishop Fenwick consecrated Bishop Tyler, and on the 24th, in the chapel of the Visitation nuns at Georgetown, he consecrated Bishop Fitzpatrick. On April 14th he installed the former at Hartford, and the first division of the Diocese of Boston was formally completed.

In spite of this amputation, the situation at the end of the Fenwick era in 1846 presented a most heartening contrast to that of the beginning in 1825. Instead of the initial nine churches, there were forty-eight in use or virtually completed. Instead of three priests, there were thirty-nine. The number of the faithful was estimated at seventy thousand.⁶⁹ Among the twenty-five dioceses of the United States, Boston stood eleventh in the number of dedicated churches and seventh in the number of priests, and it was tied with Detroit for fifth place as regards total Catholic population.

⁶⁸ Dec. 2, 1841 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 24 U 10).

⁶⁹ This figure is taken from the *Catholic Directory* for 1847. The number of churches and priests represents the writer's own computations.

CHAPTER XI

ADMINISTRATION, EDUCATION, CHARITY

I

BENEDICT JOSEPH FENWICK may be called the organizer of the Diocese of Boston. Under him there first came to be priests, laity, churches, and resources enough to constitute a viable and a fairly strong diocese. He had an opportunity to build up and mould, to fix practices and discipline, to create at least the first few lasting educational and charitable institutions, and to set the stamp of his vigorous personality upon the Catholic life of New England, in a way that was denied to his saintly but less fortunate predecessor.

Both from long experience before his promotion to Boston and from natural talent, Bishop Fenwick showed himself an excellent administrator, and one who seemed equally in his element in dealing with all manner of varied problems. Some defects may, of course, be noted in him, arising chiefly from an oversanguine disposition or from the changeableness which at times manifested itself in his plans and enthusiasms. Nevertheless, in the main he clung to his aims, principles, and methods with courage, tenacity, and sure, practical judgment, and he achieved a high measure of success.

He was a particularly good financial manager, averse to all extravagance, holding himself and his priests to "get along with what they had," regarding a debt as a nightmare, and yet not unwilling to risk one when there seemed a reasonable chance of paying it off quickly and the object was of great importance. During his early years here his income was extremely meagre, coming almost entirely from the revenues of the Cathedral and from his own inherited property in Maryland. From the early thirties onward, however, thanks to the immense growth of the Cathedral congregation, he found himself in possession of much

more ample means. Although these were always too circumscribed to suit his purposes, still, they freed him from the severe worries he had had in the beginning and allowed him to carry through such large enterprises as the *Benedicta* settlement or the founding of Holy Cross College. It was no financially encumbered heritage that he left to his successor.

A fact that deserves to be gratefully remembered is the valuable aid which the Diocese received during his time from the two great organizations which had recently been formed in Europe to further the work of Catholic foreign missions: the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, of Lyons and Paris, and the Leopoldine Association, of Vienna. Rather more tardily than most of his American fellow bishops, Dr. Fenwick got in touch with the French society in 1830, presumably through the good offices of Bishop Cheverus and of Father Patrick Byrne, who was then the latter's guest at Bordeaux.¹ In that year the Society began to grant the Diocese of Boston an annual subsidy, which was continued down to 1845, in amounts varying from 2,785 francs in 1831 to 22,600 ten years later. The total amount received from the generosity of French Catholics in this way during these sixteen years was 233,196 francs (\$46,639) — for that time a very precious windfall. In announcing the cessation of these grants in 1845, the Director of the Central Council at Paris explained that this action was taken because the Diocese of Boston was now believed to be in so prosperous a state that it could take its place among the associates of the work of the Society.² In other words, this was an attestation that the Diocese had come of age, and might be expected henceforth to be a contributor to, rather than a recipient of, funds destined for Catholic foreign missions.

From the Leopoldine Association, which interested itself chiefly in those parts of the United States where Germans were

¹ The first article about the Diocese of Boston, which was written by Father Byrne, appeared in the Society's *Annales*, IV (1830), 713 f. From 1831 on, this publication contains numerous and sometimes very lengthy reports from Bishop Fenwick, which form a valuable source for the history of Catholic growth in New England.

² Letter to Bishop Fenwick, March 5, 1845 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

numerous, less help was to be expected. Still, through the efforts of the Congregation of Propaganda at Rome, Bishop Fenwick obtained a grant from Vienna in 1833 of 5,000 florins (\$2,410).³ In 1835 and 1841 further subsidies were secured, which brought the total amount of the aid received by this Diocese from Austria to about \$6,000.⁴ A good part of this money seems to have been applied to the building of the first German church in Boston.

In his relations with his clergy Bishop Fenwick was, in the first place, the wisest and kindest of guides, counselors, and friends. "He is a veritable father to all the priests of his diocese: one must see him in action to form any idea of it" — so Father Demillier declared.⁵ "He delighted to have . . . his clergy around him," Brownson wrote: "and was never happier than when they shared freely his boundless hospitality. Nothing could be more delightful than to mark his kindness to them and their love and veneration for him."⁶ His example was their inspiration, as is shown, for instance, in a letter of one of them who, confessing with embarrassment one of his own good deeds, added that he never should have done it but for the disinterestedness and self-sacrifice which he had observed in his bishop, which, he said, "has given a new thought and a new turn to my missionary life."⁷

But Bishop Fenwick was also a superior who demanded proper discipline, strict attention to duty, and high standards of priestly conduct. To obtain these things from all his clergy was no easy matter. The clerical body which he had so hastily improvised and recruited a little bit from everywhere contained very disparate elements. Alongside many exemplary and

³ Propaganda to the Nuncio in Vienna, Nov. 17, 1832; the Nuncio to Propaganda, Nov. 30, 1832, June 9, 1833 (*Arch., Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, Guilday Transcripts*, 2144, 1372, 1390).

⁴ *Memoranda*, April 21, 1835, July 2, 1841.

⁵ Letter of Aug. 20, 1834, in *Annales de l'Association de la Propagation de la Foi*, VIII (1835), 195.

⁶ Orestes A. Brownson, "Biographical Notice of the Right Rev. Benedict Joseph Fenwick, Late Bishop of Boston," *Metropolitan Catholic Almanac and Laity's Directory for . . . 1850* (Baltimore, 1849), p. 67.

⁷ Rev. John B. Daly to Bishop Fenwick, Dec. 9, 1839 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

devoted priests, who would have been a glory to any diocese, there were some clerical misfits: priests who had made a failure of their ministry elsewhere and did not improve after coming here; or young men, ordained for the Diocese, who turned out to be unworthy of their high calling. The Bishop's correspondence contains more than one lament over the number of times he had been "deceived by adventurers" or had 'laid his hands too hastily on candidates for the priesthood.' ⁸ The main root of the difficulty was his extreme need of priests, which at times led him to accept too readily almost any volunteers who presented themselves. But a contributory cause was his optimistic temperament, his habit of believing the best about those he met, an overtrustfulness which his friend, Archbishop Eccleston, described as "an amiable although scarcely pardonable credulity." ⁹

If some incompetent or unworthy priests occasioned Bishop Fenwick much trouble, he experienced even greater difficulties from the spirit of faction and insubordination which from time to time broke forth among some groups of the laity. With all their merits, it must be admitted that the Catholic immigrants of that time brought with them certain antipathies and feuds which would better have been left behind in the Old World. The contentions between Corkonians and "Far Downers" or between men from different counties of Ireland seriously impeded the harmony and progress of the Catholic communities at Lowell, Providence, and other places, just as did the rivalry between High and Low Germans in the congregation of the Holy Trinity at Boston. Moreover, with many immigrants then, as with many belonging to the "newer races" in more recent times, the wine of American liberty at first proved somewhat inebriating. There was a natural temptation to assume that in this land of perfect freedom the Old World authorities and restraints no longer bound; that democracy required that in the Church as in the State the people should rule. The system of laymen's control that was practiced by virtually all Protes-

⁸ Letter to Rev. George Fenwick, S.J., April 27, 1836 (*Fordham Arch.*, 211 K 11); to Bishop Hughes, April 6, Sept. 8, 1841 (*New York Dioc. Arch.*, A 11).

⁹ Archbishop Eccleston to Bishop Hughes, June 22, 1842 (*New York Dioc. Arch.*, A 11).

tant denominations was a seductive example. Was not that the American way of ordering church government? Furthermore, the conditions of Catholic life in those pioneer days fostered the tendencies to self-assertion on the part of the laity. At a time when the laymen often bought the first lot and sometimes built the first church before any priest appeared on the scene, or when at least congregations were constantly called upon to organize and to strain all their efforts towards building a church and then towards paying off the debt incurred, it was natural that the laity should feel their importance and should form the habit of taking an active share in running the affairs of their church.

As a result of all this, it is well known, there developed throughout the American Church during the earlier part of the nineteenth century a movement which is called "Trusteeism." This movement assumed various forms. In its most moderate form, it sought to assert for the laity only the right, through their representatives or "trustees," to participate in the management of the financial and other temporal affairs of their church. Often, however, the title to the church property was vested in the trustees, and sometimes the claim was made that they had the *jus patronatus*: the right to choose their pastors and to dismiss them. Although this last pretension was utterly incompatible with Catholic discipline, the other two rights claimed, if exercised in proper subordination to bishops and pastors, might not have been inadmissible. The first of them has, in fact, been enjoyed by the laity in most Catholic lands since the Middle Ages. Under the conditions then prevailing in this country, however, Trusteeism in any form was likely to lead to factions, disorders, and resistance to legitimate authority, as the history of every diocese along the seaboard from New York to New Orleans shows.

The Diocese of Boston was, from the outset, spared the worst evils of this sort, thanks to the skillful management of Father Matignon and Bishop Cheverus, and especially to their insistence that all church property should be vested in the Bishop, either in fee simple or in trust for the congregation.

But the causes that generated Trusteeism remained, and Bishop Fenwick had again and again to struggle against the outcroppings of the movement.

Warned by his own experiences in Charleston, he was, from the beginning of his episcopate, determined to resist any attempt to "wrest from his hands the management of the temporals of the Church, and to put the Church of Boston in the same predicament as those Churches of the United States in which the clergymen are wholly dependent upon the People and where Lay trustees rule and direct as they please." Indeed, he thought it unwise to admit the laity to "any participation in the government or even the temporals of the Church."¹⁰ As far as the titles to church property were concerned, he adhered firmly to the system of his predecessor. But practical necessities often made it difficult to exclude the laity from any share in the management of temporalities.

At the Cathedral he inherited at least a rudimentary trustee system. While Father Matignon for many years had kept the financial affairs of that parish wholly in his own hands, after his death Bishop Cheverus, disliking to burden himself with such drudgery, had turned them over to a committee chosen by himself from among the congregation. Soon after Bishop Fenwick's arrival, he encountered a strong movement among the people to replace this appointed committee by an elected one; and after holding back as long as he thought prudent, he consented that — for one time only — an election should be held. The new committee within a year rendered themselves thoroughly unpopular, especially by their decrees as to the redistribution of pews after the enlargement of the Cathedral. For a few weeks, in September, 1827, the usually so loyal and placid congregation of the Holy Cross was a prey to fierce dissensions and wild projects. Some proposed even "to build a new church, to hold it on shares, to choose their own clergymen, and to live independently of the Bishop."¹¹ While the storm quickly subsided, Bishop Fenwick, who had — not too willingly — supported the committee during the crisis, seems to have

¹⁰ *Memoranda*, Jan. 2, 1826, Sept. 18, 1827.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, Sept. 13, 18, 1827.

utilized the outbreak to get rid of these trustees not long afterwards and to recover sole control of the temporal affairs of his Cathedral.

Elsewhere, however, there are numerous examples, scattered throughout this episcopate, of elected committees of laymen sharing in the management of the finances and other temporal concerns of their churches. Instances of this may be found in the German congregation of Boston, at Charlestown, Salem, Lowell, Portland, Eastport, Fall River, Hartford, and, probably, in many other places. How permanent or how well organized this system was it would be difficult to say, since we usually hear of these committees only at times when there were disagreements between them and their pastors. Bishop Fenwick appears to have tolerated them, while insisting that the pastors should always be present at their meetings and that nothing should be decided upon contrary to the pastor's views. A more delicate problem arose when, as occasionally happened, a congregation or their elected committee refused to receive, or to retain any longer, the priest who had been sent to them. While always willing to consider the wishes or the grievances of his flock, the Bishop in such cases had to set his face firmly against admitting any claims that savored of the obnoxious *jus patronatus*.

II

While there had been various petty "stirs" and flurries of trouble in this or that congregation in earlier years, the first serious outbreak of the spirit of Trusteeism in Bishop Fenwick's time came in 1842. The focus of disorder in this case was St. Mary's, in the North End of Boston, a church which had suffered more than once before from factions and divisions in the congregation.

St. Mary's had two co-pastors: the Rev. Patrick O'Beirne and the Rev. Dr. O'Flaherty. The former, though without the brilliant talents of his elder colleague, had by six years of devoted service gained a large personal following in the parish. The

latter, ever since his return to the Diocese in 1840, had developed such an exuberant activity in promoting the two causes then most popular in Irish circles — Repeal and Temperance — as gave him a unique position in the hearts of most Boston Catholics. These two clergymen disagreed, and disagreed seriously. Their contentions became known to their parishioners. The congregation split into two factions, each of which began to assail the Bishop with pleas that its favorite should be appointed chief pastor and that his rival should be subordinated or removed. Bishop Fenwick impartially rejected the petitions of both sides. It is clear, however, that a marked change had taken place in his private sentiments towards Dr. O'Flaherty, who a decade before — in the days of *The Jesuit* and the Anti-Beecher Lectures — had been his chief lieutenant. He now believed that the main root of the trouble at St. Mary's was the Doctor's personal ambition and thirst for popularity.¹²

Embittered by various signs that the Bishop's sympathies inclined towards his rival, Father O'Flaherty began to ally himself all too closely with a faction which existed both at St. Mary's and in other Boston congregations: a faction which, on various counts, objected to Dr. Fenwick's ways of running things, and which was saturated with ideas characteristic of radical Truetteism. An agitation started which involved much greater questions than who was to be pastor of St. Mary's. The real issue was whether Catholic churches were to be controlled by the Bishop or by lay trustees, and the chief patron of this agitation was the most eloquent and popular priest in Boston.¹³

Starting in the last months of 1841, by the beginning of the next year the crisis was becoming acute. Rioting at St. Mary's Church was feared, and there were rumors that the O'Flaherty faction were planning a public meeting to trumpet forth their

¹² Bishop Fenwick to Rev. George Fenwick, S.J., March 12, 1842 (*Fordham Arch.*, 213 K 9).

¹³ The inside history of this crisis is best to be gleaned from the confidential letter of the Bishop to his brother, cited in the preceding footnote. The ideas of the faction opposed to Bishop Fenwick are set forth at great length, though scarcely with perfect candor, in a series of articles in the *Daily Mail* (April 20 to June 7, 1842), by Maurice O'Connell, one of the ringleaders of the movement.

grievances against the Bishop. On Sunday, January 9th, therefore, Dr. Fenwick, accompanied by Father O'Beirne, appeared at St. Mary's during the High Mass, and in an hour's sermon on the text "And He was subject to them" pleaded with his people for harmony and obedience to lawful superiors, while warning the trouble-makers that scandalous and seditious public meetings might be punished with excommunication.¹⁴ Nevertheless, the next day the opposition published an invitation to "all Catholics having the interests of religion at heart" to meet on Thursday evening at Marlboro Hall. On that evening (the 13th) an immense crowd assembled, with feelings on both sides stirred to fever pitch. John Dee, chairman of the meeting and one of Dr. O'Flaherty's foremost supporters, at once struck what was intended to be the keynote of the evening by launching into a tirade against the Bishop. Protests rang out from all over the hall. Wild uproar and confusion broke out and continued until, fearing physical violence, Dee and his friends declared the meeting adjourned and fled by a side door, while the constables dispersed the exasperated crowd.¹⁵

Eager to calm the rising storm, Bishop Fenwick, on the following Sunday, held a meeting of the congregation in the basement of St. Mary's, hoping by means of discussion to elucidate the causes of unrest and to ascertain the will of the majority as to who should be their pastor. According to his own account, however, "forty or fifty disturbers, principally from other congregations," so interrupted the proceedings that this meeting, too, had to be adjourned "to prevent worse consequences."¹⁶ Failing in this effort to reconcile the people, the harassed Bishop next endeavored to reconcile the two co-pastors, and in this he was more successful. On Sunday, January 23rd, before the assembled congregation the two long-estranged priests went through the ceremony of a public reconciliation, and Dr. O'Flaherty read a paper, drawn up by the Bishop, in which the laity were urged to "lay aside their differences after the example

¹⁴ *Memoranda*, Jan. 9, 1842; *Daily Mail*, May 27, 1842.

¹⁵ *Memoranda*, Jan. 13, 14, 1842; *Daily Mail*, Jan. 15; *Mercantile Journal*, Jan. 15.

¹⁶ *Memoranda*, Jan. 16, 1842.

of their Pastors, and no longer to be a disunited people to the scandal of religion.”¹⁷ Some weeks later, at his own request, Father O’Beirne was transferred to be Father Corry’s assistant at Providence. Dr. O’Flaherty remained in possession of the field, although the Rev. John B. Fitzpatrick was now appointed his colleague.

The O’Beirne party, however, could not be reconciled to this defeat. On Sunday, February 20th, at vespers St. Mary’s Church witnessed a scandalous scene. Father Fitzpatrick having conducted the first part of the service, when Dr. O’Flaherty began to intone the prayers, he was interrupted by loud shouts from many parts of the church: “We won’t have you — we want Mr. O’Beirne!” “Pull him down!” “Away with you!” “Down with the tyrant!” etc., etc. The tumult continued until, after the Doctor had been led into the sacristy and Father Fitzpatrick had declared the service at an end, the officers of the law appeared at the doors.¹⁸ Eighteen members of the congregation were arrested next day for rioting, ten of whom were subsequently convicted and sentenced to fines. St. Mary’s Church was for two weeks placed under an interdict.

Meanwhile, this sad example of seditious agitation and continuous disorders in Boston was arousing imitation elsewhere. At Salem the trustees, who had long been fighting their pastor, the Rev. James Strain, redoubled their activities, finally reaching the peak of arrogance when they called a meeting of the congregation for February 27th to decide by majority vote whether or not they should expel their priest.¹⁹ To prevent that meeting, Bishop Fenwick had to send Father Strain out of town on the Sunday in question. At Taunton there was a brief outburst of opposition to the appointment of Father Dennis Ryan to succeed the popular Father Wiley.²⁰ And at Providence, where both the pastor and the people of SS. Peter and Paul’s were still aggrieved over the division of their parish, a

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Jan. 22, 1842; *Daily Times*, Feb. 22, 1842.

¹⁸ *Memoranda*, Feb. 20, 1842; *Morning Post*, Feb. 23, March 16, 19, 1842; *Courier*, Feb. 22; *Daily Mail*, Feb. 23; *Atlas*, March 17, etc.

¹⁹ *Salem Register*, Feb. 24, 1842; *Memoranda*, Feb. 25.

²⁰ *Memoranda*, Jan. 17, 21, 1842.

meeting of the congregation drew up so insolent a protest to the Bishop over the sending of Father O'Beirne to them that Dr. Fenwick at once recalled him and threatened to withdraw Father Corry.²¹

Faced with this epidemic of opposition, the Bishop on March 4th ordered sweeping changes. Dr. O'Flaherty might have — and it seems likely that he did have — the support of the large majority of the congregation of St. Mary's, but it was clear that peace would not be restored in that distracted parish until both the clergymen concerned in the recent controversy had been removed. Besides, his conduct both before and since the riot of February 20th had given much cause for displeasure. Hence he was now transferred to Salem, Father Strain being sent as assistant to Worcester. Father O'Beirne was assigned to Portland, while the late pastor of that city, Rev. Patrick Flood, was brought to Boston to assist Father Fitzpatrick at St. Mary's.

These measures, in the main, effected their purpose, although it was long before tranquillity was completely restored. Petitions for Dr. O'Flaherty's restoration to Boston were organized both at St. Mary's and at the Cathedral, and drew no less than thirty-three hundred signatures.²² When it became clear that no attention would be paid to this request, one of the Doctor's foremost supporters published, in a newspaper notorious for its anti-Catholic bias, a scandalous series of articles, vehemently attacking the Bishop, championing the purest principles of Trusteeship, and calling upon all Catholics within two hours' walk of Faneuil Hall to gather there for a great meeting that should establish once for all a quite new order in the churches of Boston.²³ For months and, indeed, for years the O'Flaherty party continued to agitate for the return of their "exiled" hero, with innumerable demonstrations of undying loyalty to him and resentment against Bishop Fenwick, barbed articles in the newspapers, pilgrimages *en masse* — by special train — to Salem, etc. The Doctor himself, in his "dear little Patmos,"²⁴ com-

²¹ *Ibid.*, Feb. 24, 1842.

²² *Daily Mail*, April 20, 1842.

²³ The articles of Maurice O'Connell, referred to in a previous footnote.

²⁴ His own phrase in a letter published in *The Pilot*, Jan. 20, 1844.

ported himself with more discretion than did his adherents; but there can be little doubt that for the rest of his life he considered himself a wronged and frustrated man, and that the Bishop considered him the leader of a permanent Fronde.

III

The disturbances of 1842 were the immediate cause of two important innovations: the holding of the first Clergy Retreat and of the first Diocesan Synod. Both were intended to quiet the troubled waters and to produce a higher degree of unity, harmony, and discipline among the clergy, and ultimately among the laity. Such gatherings, it may be noted, were then just beginning to be introduced into American dioceses, New York, for instance, holding its first synod almost at the same time as Boston.

The first retreat of the Boston clergy was held at the Cathedral August 12-20, 1842, with the Bishop and twenty-nine priests in attendance. The exercises were conducted by Dr. Fenwick's old friend and associate in the Society of Jesus, the celebrated Father John McElroy.

The first Diocesan Synod then followed (August 21-26), with the Vicar-General, the Very Rev. William Tyler, acting as Promoter, Father O'Callaghan as Procurator of the Clergy, and Rev. John B. Fitzpatrick as Secretary. Most of the daily sessions were devoted to the consideration of the decrees passed by the first four Provincial Councils of Baltimore and to the discussion of the question how far these decrees could at once be applied here. Towards the close, special committees of three priests each examined and reported upon the revenues, property, and debts of every church in the Diocese. On the last day of the synod twenty-two statutes were promulgated as the result of these deliberations.

The first of these statutes adopted in general terms the decrees of the four Councils of Baltimore, and the remaining statutes consisted largely of a restatement of some of those decrees upon which it was desired to lay emphasis or in which

some modification seemed required by local conditions. Of special importance, with reference to the problem of Trusteeism, were the enactments that (saving the rights of religious orders) the titles to all the churches in the Diocese must be vested in the Bishop in trust for the congregations; and that any priest who encouraged the attempts of lay trustees or others to interfere in the designation or rejection of pastors or to impede the exercise of episcopal authority should incur the penalty of suspension. Priests were forbidden to be absent from their place of duty for as long as a week without grave reason and the consent of the Bishop. They were also enjoined to keep careful records of baptisms and marriages; they must not officiate in other congregations or districts, nor marry nor baptize persons from outside their districts, without the consent of the pastor concerned; nor could they publish books on sacred subjects without the approval of the Ordinary. It bespeaks the conditions of a pioneer age that the statutes prescribed that baptismal fonts and confessionals should be introduced into every church as soon as possible. The *Ritual* recently published according to the decrees of the Third Council of Baltimore was to be everywhere adopted; church music was to conform to the rules of the same council; midnight Masses at Christmas were forbidden; and so was the custom of collecting money or tickets at the doors of churches.²⁵

In spite of the good accomplished by the clergy retreat and the synod, and by the missions for the laity which the Bishop soon afterwards had preached at the Cathedral, St. Mary's, and elsewhere, the last years of the Fenwick régime did not pass off altogether without disturbances. The dismissal of Father Corry from the pastorate of SS. Peter and Paul's, Providence (September 8, 1843), gave rise to a new ebullition in that turbulent congregation. A laymen's committee seized possession of the church, with its books, keys, and other property, and assumed so insolent an attitude that they were, apparently, threatened with an interdict.²⁶ After a month of tension, how-

²⁵ *Synodus Dioecisana Bostoniensis I, Habita Anno 1842. Bostoniae, ex typis Patritii Donahoe* (n.d.).

²⁶ Father Fitton's statement that the church was actually placed under an interdict (*Sketches*, pp. 228 f.), seems improbable, since it appears from the

ever, Father Fitton, sent down from Worcester as the new pastor, succeeded on his first Sunday in winning over the congregation and imposing upon the committee a complete surrender.

A year later more serious troubles began at Waltham. The pastor, Father James Strain, formerly of Salem, had antagonized many of his parishioners, as he did everywhere else, by his tactlessness and sharp tongue. A formal grievance was supplied when, at the end of 1844, he began to build a rectory on the church lot. That lot, when purchased in 1830, had been deeded to Bishop Fenwick "in trust for the Roman Catholics of Waltham and its vicinity, to permit the said Catholics to use, occupy, and enjoy the same premises, and to erect buildings thereon for the purpose of religious worship."²⁷ On the ground to be occupied by the rectory the parishioners, most of whom came from some distance, had been accustomed to hitch their horses during services. It was claimed that there was no other place in the neighborhood available for that purpose, and that if this space was taken away from them, a great part of the Catholics would be unable to enjoy the privileges of religious worship. Hence, in April, 1845, a committee of the congregation secured from the Supreme Judicial Court an injunction restraining Bishop Fenwick and Father Strain from proceeding with the building of the rectory, and started a suit in equity on the matter which was to drag on for several years.

For a twelvemonth after that an uneasy truce prevailed, until Father Strain had a disagreement with, and commenced a lawsuit against, Michael Rogers, who had hitherto been his chief supporter in the congregation. Furious with rage, Rogers then organized an insurrection and closed the doors of the church on the pastor. In the last weeks of Bishop Fenwick's life the Waltham crisis was approaching a dangerous climax. An insurgent committee was constantly guarding the church to prevent Mass from being said; Father Strain's adherents were

Bishop's *Memoranda* that throughout the crisis a priest was sent down from Boston to say Mass for the people each Sunday.

²⁷ *Middlesex Deeds*, book 299, p. 386.

threatening to force an entry; and the town authorities and the militia were on the *qui vive* to prevent a pitched battle between the two factions.

IV

As a Jesuit and a former college president, Bishop Fenwick was, naturally, extremely interested in Catholic education, and, in spite of his limited resources, he succeeded in giving that cause a vigorous impulsion in numerous ways.

He may be called, if not the founder, at least the second founder of Catholic Sunday schools in this Diocese. Doubtless the instruction of children in Christian doctrine had not been neglected under Father Matignon and Bishop Cheverus, although we have few records of it at that time. At any rate, when Bishop Fenwick came to Boston he found no Sunday school at the Cathedral, and Catholic children were being attracted in great numbers into the "Sabbath schools" which various Protestant organizations were busily establishing in the Irish sections of the city. To remedy this situation was one of the main aims he had in view in enlarging the Cathedral in 1826-1827. As soon as this reconstruction had been completed, in the two large rooms fitted up in the basement he opened a Sunday school, to which he gave a large amount of personal attention, and which became a very flourishing and well-ordered institution. Similar schools probably arose in virtually all the other Catholic churches of this period. It seems then to have been the common rule that the children were catechized not only for two hours on Sunday (one hour before the High Mass and one hour before vespers), but also for an hour on each of two weekday afternoons.

With regard to secular education, American Catholics faced a very difficult problem. The leaders of the Church were as much convinced then as in later times that Catholic youth ought to receive an instruction based on Catholic principles and imparted in a Catholic atmosphere. The First Provincial Council of Baltimore, in 1829, proclaimed: "We judge it ab-

solutely necessary that schools be established in which the young may be taught the principles of faith and morality, while being instructed in letters.”²⁸ Dr. Fenwick himself wrote: “I would not give a straw for that species of education which is not accompanied with and based upon religion.”²⁹ But anything like the free parochial schools of today was, of course, out of the question at that time, for lack both of money and of an adequate supply of teachers. The best that could be hoped for was a “pay school,” taught by some schoolmaster from Ireland or a Yankee convert; housed in the church basement or some other small nook; and supported in more or less famishing style by the fees paid by parents and occasional collections taken up in church.

Bishop Fenwick did, indeed, attempt a more ambitious venture at the Cathedral. Simultaneously with the new Sunday school and in the same basement rooms, he opened in 1827 two day-schools, for boys and girls respectively, which were together called the “Catholic Academy.” The boys’ division was for years taught by the young clerics of the Bishop’s House Seminary, who thus found means of partial self-support. The curriculum was extensive, including Latin, Greek, French, and Spanish; and in the girls’ division it could almost vie with that of the Ursuline Academy. The tuition ranged, in accordance with the courses chosen, from two dollars to five dollars per quarter. While the “Catholic Academy” enrolled about one hundred pupils at the start, and later a somewhat larger number, it was far from easy to maintain such a school. The number of Catholic parents who could afford even such moderate fees was small; and there was a still greater difficulty about finding teachers as the House Seminary diminished and died out. The girls’ division gave way in 1832 to the free school opened up by the Sisters of Charity. The boys’ division was discontinued by 1839, when we find a writer in *The Pilot* be-

²⁸ Rt. Rev. Peter Guilday, *A History of the Councils of Baltimore (1791-1884)* (New York, 1932), p. 94.

²⁹ Letter to Philip Scanlan, March 26, 1831 (U.S. Cath. Hist. Soc., *Records and Studies*, XI [1900], p. 403).

wailing that, numerous as the Catholics had now become, there was not a single male school attached to any church in Boston.³⁰

Elsewhere there are traces of Catholic day-schools existing at one time or another during the Fenwick period at Charlestown, East Cambridge, Salem, Lowell, Worcester, Cabotville, Burlington, Bangor, Fall River, New Haven, and Hartford, and doubtless there were many more. The *Catholic Directory* for 1845 even goes so far as to declare — with a probably excessive optimism: “There are common schools for both male and female children in most of the cities and towns of this Diocese (Boston), having Catholic teachers.”³¹ It is to be feared that most of these schools had but a precarious and intermittent existence. It is certain that the great majority of Catholic children at that time could get an education only in the public schools.

For the public schools of New England this was an age of great expansion and momentous changes under the guidance of such leaders as Horace Mann in Massachusetts and Henry Barnard in Connecticut. It was, in particular, the period that saw the beginning of the process by which religious instruction has been driven from the public schools. This process started without anyone foreseeing or desiring its ultimate outcome. Throughout the colonial period and long afterwards, religious teaching, naturally of a thoroughly Protestant sort, had been given in all New England schools. The Bible, the Westminster Catechism, and primers filled with Calvinistic piety had been among the chief textbooks. In the first half of the nineteenth century nearly all Protestants were still at one with Catholics in believing that religious and moral instruction were a most essential part of any proper system of education. The new difficulty that was arising lay, of course, in defining what kind of religion should be taught, now that the old religious homogeneity of this region was breaking down.

³⁰ *Pilot*, Nov. 16, 1839. On the “Catholic Academy”: the Bishop’s *Memoranda*, *passim*; *The Jesuit*, Sept. 26, 1829, Jan. 22, 1831, Jan. 19, 1833; Brownson’s already cited article in the *Metropolitan Catholic Almanac for 1850*, p. 63.

³¹ *The Metropolitan Catholic Almanac, and Laity’s Directory for the Year 1845* (Baltimore, n.d.), p. 149.

The first symptom of change was the movement in the early decades of the century towards "non-sectarianism" in the schools. Originally this term connoted merely the replacing of a strictly Congregationalist brand of religious instruction by one acceptable to all Protestant denominations. Catholics were as yet not deemed worthy of consideration. In Massachusetts non-sectarianism achieved a notable victory in the Act of 1827, which prescribed that the local school committees should "never direct any schoolbooks to be purchased or used . . . which are calculated to favour any particular religious sect or tenet." The full import of this law was scarcely felt, however, until ten years later. As long as each community ran its own schools pretty independently, the Evangelical sects, who agreed fairly easily among themselves, and who dominated most New England towns, maintained a placid supremacy. But a new situation began to arise in 1837, when there was created a powerful State Board of Education, the secretary of which was the dynamic Horace Mann — a Unitarian.

Mann was far from wishing to "secularize the schools," as he was then, and has ever since been frequently, accused of doing. On the contrary, he was extremely anxious to retain religious and moral instruction, and he was almost fiercely insistent on the use of the Bible. But it must be, always and everywhere, a kind of religious instruction to which Unitarians could assent — and that, according to the Evangelicals, meant reducing it to a hazy deism or mere natural religion. For a dozen years he had to wage a hot battle against the more conservative Protestants, but more and more his views prevailed.

By the end of the Fenwick period, then, the public schools of Massachusetts were coming to give only the most attenuated and neutral kind of religious instruction — a kind still utterly unacceptable to Catholics, not so much for what it did as for what it did not say. For the rest, the daily sessions were opened with prayers of a Protestant kind, and the reading of the Protestant version of the Bible, "without note or comment"; and the textbooks still bristled with misstatements about, or attacks upon, the Catholic Church. As far as Catholics were concerned,

non-sectarianism or the equality guaranteed to all denominations by the State Constitution were still but myths.³²

Against such conditions New England Catholics as yet ventured to make but few protests. Bishop Fenwick's one recorded intervention of that kind was in 1843, when he addressed two strong letters to the Mayor and School Committee of Boston about the errors and bigotry of Worcester's *Elements of History*, pointing out that under the Act of 1827 it was manifestly illegal to prescribe as a schoolbook a work whose author "must evidently have intended to render the Catholic religion both odious and ridiculous." As a result, the School Committee ordered that the portions of the book objected to should no longer be used in the schools.³³

The only community in New England in which a really serious effort was made during this period to solve the problem of the relations between Catholics and the public schools was Lowell. The experiment conducted there has attracted so much attention from the historians of American education that it deserves to be narrated in some detail.

V

Lowell was, for various reasons, more likely than most New England towns to strike out on new paths in education. On the one hand, it was a new community, relatively untrammelled by tradition, proud of its modernity and broad-mindedness, fond of doing things in a novel and large way. On the other hand, it had, from the beginning, a larger percentage of foreign-born residents than almost any other New England commun-

³² By far the best study of the subject treated above is Sherman M. Smith, *The Relation of the State to Religious Education in Massachusetts* (Syracuse, 1926). Cf. also Raymond B. Culver, *Horace Mann and Religion in the Massachusetts Public Schools* (New Haven, 1929); (Rt. Rev.) Louis S. Walsh, "Religious Education in the Public Schools of Massachusetts," *Am. Cath. Quart. Rev.*, XXIX (1904), 93-118; Burton Confrey, *Secularism in American Education: its History* (Cath. Univ. of America, Educational Research Monographs, VI, 1931, no. 1).

³³ Bishop Fenwick's letters of Jan. 28, Feb. 23, 1843; Mayor Brimmer to Bishop Fenwick, April 5 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

ity. That concentrated and rapidly growing mass of "foreigners" in "the Irish Camp" on the Acre aroused in the leaders of the native population deep concern and a certain trepidation. It seemed to them highly important to Americanize these people as quickly as possible, and for that purpose, it was thought, nothing could be more helpful than to draw the younger generation under the influence of the public schools. Efforts in this direction were made from the earliest years of the town by various leading citizens, notably by the Rev. Theodore Edson, rector of St. Anne's Episcopal Church — a lifelong friend of the Irish. But such efforts long proved fruitless. The Irish distrusted the public schools, and vastly preferred Catholic private ones.

The first Catholic school appears to have been started as early as 1824 or 1825. It was kept, we are told, in a shanty on the Acre by "an Irishman approved by the priest."³⁴ Discontinued after a time, it was resumed in 1829 in other quarters, with Bishop Fenwick's encouragement, by a schoolmaster named Patrick Collins. In the following year Mr. Edson and others began a new campaign to assure the benefits of education to the Irish. At their instigation the Town Meeting of May 3, 1830, authorized the School Committee "for this year only" to expend fifty dollars "in the way they shall deem expedient . . . for the instruction of the children of the Irish families in this town"; and that Committee — making a bold innovation hitherto unparalleled in New England — simply turned over this part of the public funds as a subsidy to the existing Catholic school.³⁵ That was too good to last, however. When the time came for fixing plans for the ensuing year, negotiations took place in which the School Board offered that there should be a separate school intended exclusively for the Irish and supported by the Town, but insisted that this should be an integral part of the public school system and conducted like any

³⁴ Rev. Theodore Edson, *An Address Delivered at the Colburn Grammar School, in Lowell, December 13, 1848* (*ibid.*, 1849), pp. 18 f. The priest in question was presumably Father Byrne.

³⁵ *Lowell Town Records* (City Hall, Lowell).

other school. The Irish spokesmen, on the other hand, desired that it should have Catholic teachers, Catholic textbooks, and Catholic religious instruction, none of which concessions the Board was yet willing to grant.³⁶ The Town Meeting of April 4, 1831, voted to establish a public school on the Acre for Irish children only, thus definitely establishing the principle of segregation; but otherwise matters returned pretty much to the status of before 1830. The public school for the Irish had money but few pupils; the Catholic school, now lodged in the basement of St. Patrick's Church, had pupils, but little money.

After four years of this unsatisfactory situation, both sides were eager to find some better solution of the problem. Father Peter Connolly, the very active assistant pastor of St. Patrick's, took the initiative in reopening negotiations; the School Committee entered readily into his views; and a compromise arrangement highly agreeable to both sides was quickly worked out. The essence of this famous Agreement of 1835 was as follows:

1. The Committee consented to adopt and support as town schools both the school established in the basement of St. Patrick's (June 14th) and, shortly afterwards, one which Father Connolly had recently set up in the Chapel Hill section (September 14th).

2. These schools were to have only Catholic teachers (and in fact the previous masters, Patrick Collins and Daniel McIlroy, were retained).

3. "The books, exercise, and studies should all be prescribed and regulated by the Committee, and none other whatever should be taught or allowed." But "no book nor regulation should be introduced . . . derogating from, or reflecting upon the character of, the Catholic religion, directly or indirectly"; and the Board apparently agreed to Father Connolly's reservation that new textbooks dealing with controversial subjects should not be adopted without the approval of a priest.³⁷

³⁶ Some glimpse into these negotiations is afforded by Bishop Fenwick's letter to Philip Scanlan, of March 26, 1831: in U.S. Cath. Hist. Soc., *Records and Studies*, XI (1900), 403.

³⁷ *Records, Lowell School Committee*, June 8, 14, Sept. 14, 1835 (City Hall). *Report of the School Committee for the Year Ending March, 1836*, p. 2.

This was, on the whole, a remarkably liberal and equitable arrangement. From the standpoint of the Committee, it had the advantage that it maintained the essential unity of the public school system, and that it promised to bring under the influence of that system a part of the population which had hitherto resolutely boycotted it. From the Catholic standpoint, it was much that there were henceforth to be town-supported schools, taught by Catholic teachers, having a Catholic atmosphere, and safeguarded against anti-Catholic influences. The chief drawback in the arrangement was that it gave too little leeway for positive Catholic religious instruction. At any rate, according to the regulations issued by the School Board in 1836, ten minutes daily were to be devoted to religious exercises in all public schools, and in "the Catholic schools" these exercises were to consist of prayers and the reading of any book that might be approved by the sub-committee on those schools.³⁸

The system inaugurated in 1835 continued, nominally, at least, until 1852, and during its first eight years seemed to work admirably. The number of "Catholic" or "Irish schools" — both terms were used officially — was steadily increased. They included, for a time, two grammar schools, later consolidated into one (Number 5, later called the Mann Grammar School); and, by 1843, there were five common schools, four of which were located in the basement of St. Patrick's. The annual reports of the School Committee regularly dwelt upon the success and prosperity of the Irish schools, and upon the unique wisdom that the City had shown in dealing with this problem. Catholic newspapers and public speakers never tired of praising "the grand movement" that had been started at Lowell, and which ought to spread to the rest of the country.

In 1843, however, the system, unhappily, began to break down. One primary requisite for its successful operation was the maintenance of constant, close coöperation between the annually elected School Committees and the Catholic pastors of Lowell. Such coöperation could best have been assured if the Catholic pastor, who, after all, represented the interests of at

³⁸ *Records, Lowell School Committee*, Nov. 8, 1836.

least one fifth of the population, could have been a member of that Committee, which normally included one to three Protestant ministers. But even at Lowell liberality had not yet advanced to the point where the election to the Board of a priest, or of any Catholic, could be thought of. If the pastor, therefore, was to maintain his proper influence over the "Catholic schools" in an unofficial and informal way, he needed the strong and united support of the Catholic community. Unfortunately, such support was, too often, signally lacking.

Father James McDermott, pastor of St. Patrick's from 1837 to 1847, had from the beginning had to face vehement opposition within his own flock. The reasons for this hostility are far from clear, but it is, at any rate, certain that the opposing faction included some of the oldest and most influential members of his congregation; the men who controlled the Irish Benevolent Society, the foremost Catholic organization of the city; the men who, after 1841, were leaders in the affairs of the new St. Peter's Church. In spite of this continuous campaign against him, Father McDermott seems for some years to have stood well with the School Board and to have been much consulted by them. In the spring of 1843 he became intensely dissatisfied with a group of Catholic teachers, whom he himself had helped to appoint, apparently on the ground of their supposed neglect of their religious duties. Whatever may have been the justification for this belief, it would seem that he proceeded against them with a zeal somewhat too intemperate. He denounced them repeatedly from the altar — and, it is said, by name even. Under his influence, petitions from parents flowed in to the School Committee, requesting the dismissal of seven out of the nine Catholic teachers. He himself addressed a formal demand to the Board to the same effect.

But, except for James Egan, principal of the Grammar School, the accused teachers refused to resign under fire. The faction opposed to Father McDermott rallied to their defense, asserting that this was all a matter of personal pique and that these admirable teachers had given no cause for offense save to have transferred themselves from St. Patrick's to St. Peter's

Church. The School Committee, finding the Catholics so divided and not having received any specific charges or evidence against the six teachers, refused to discharge them. Father McDermott then ordered the school-children of his parish to go on strike as long as the six remained. For a few weeks the Irish schools were almost deserted. But the Board, the teachers, the opposition stood firm. The strike petered out, and in the end Father McDermott was completely vanquished.³⁹

This unhappy affair marked a turning-point. For the first time since the Agreement of 1835 the School Committee had gone flatly against the views of the Catholic pastor in an important matter connected with the "Catholic schools," and had done so amid the applause of a large part of the Catholics. Henceforth, as far as the records of the Committee show, contact was completely broken between the Board and the chief Catholic pastor of the city.⁴⁰ Moreover, the Committee was so indignant over what had happened that, towards the end of the year, it seriously considered breaking away from the system of 1835 altogether. Finally, they decided to go on with it "for the present";⁴¹ but henceforth they were to practice it in a different spirit and with growing carelessness about faithfully adhering to its terms.

A striking indication of the new tendencies was the revolution effected in the teaching staff a year later — a revolution which certainly had nothing to do with the wishes of Father McDermott. Vacancies having occurred in the Irish Grammar School, in September, 1844, two Protestant teachers were appointed. Three months later Martin Flynn, a Catholic, resigned as principal of that school, and was succeeded by George Shattuck, a Protestant. Further changes followed so quickly that by March, 1845, out of twelve teachers in the "Catholic

³⁹ *Records, Lowell School Committee*, July 17 to Dec. 4, 1843, *passim*; *Report of the Lowell School Committee for the Year Ending March 31, 1844*, pp. 5 ff.; *Lowell Courier*, July 13, 20, 1843; *Boston Daily Bee*, July 11, Aug. 2, 1843; *Pilot*, July 22, 1843.

⁴⁰ Father Conway, at St. Peter's, never seems to have taken any part in school affairs.

⁴¹ *Records*, Oct. 16, Dec. 4, 1843.

schools," only six were Catholics. A year later the Catholic quota had shrunk to three out of twelve. This transformation of the staff can scarcely be explained by assuming a sudden shortage of qualified Catholic teachers. It was probably due to the fact that since the Catholics were too much divided to assert themselves, and since Irish children had now become accustomed to frequent the public schools, it no longer seemed necessary to continue the concessions made in 1835.

Henceforth the system was obviously disintegrating. The name of "Irish schools" was, indeed, kept up, and their number increased as the Celtic population grew. In 1851 there were eleven of them: one grammar school and ten primaries. A few Catholic teachers were still to be found: there were five employed in that year. But even the principle of separate schools was now most imperfectly maintained, for there were not a few Yankee pupils in the Irish schools, and there were Irish children in all the schools of the city. And, apart from that principle, all the other portions of the Agreement of 1835 had gone by the board. No Catholic clergyman any longer had a voice in the management of the Irish schools. Since 1847 St. Patrick's Church no longer housed any of them. In their curriculum, their teaching staff (with few exceptions), and doubtless in their tone and atmosphere, they had become indistinguishable from the public schools. In short, the native Americans of Lowell had attained the purpose for which they entered into the Agreement. They had "coaxed the Irish into the public schools." But the Irish in the end had been disappointed in virtually all the hopes which they had based upon that arrangement. It is not surprising, then, that in 1852, when Father John O'Brien brought in the Sisters of Notre Dame to start St. Patrick's parochial school, both sides agreed that the system of 1835 was dead.

From a Catholic standpoint, this ultimate failure of the Lowell experiment would seem a matter for regret. That experiment offered, not indeed a complete and adequate solution of the Church-and-Public School problem, but at least some of the elements of a solution, some basic ideas which, if developed

further, might have led to happy results. But it scarcely was what it has sometimes been called: the most liberal approach to this problem ever made by a New England community. That encomium belongs rather to an experiment which has almost invariably been overlooked: the one carried on at Manchester, New Hampshire, during the 1860's, when the School Board adopted and for years supported six schools taught by Catholic nuns.⁴²

VI

"The thing I want most," wrote Bishop Fenwick in 1830, "(and until I attain it I am persuaded that nothing permanent can or will ever be effected in this quarter) is a Seminary and College. And for my part I have not a cent to build them with."⁴³ In congratulating the same episcopal correspondent next year upon having founded a college for the training of future clergymen, he added: "I believe that such an institution — by which one can obtain priests educated in the native tongue, under one's own direction, and imbued with one's own spirit — to be the most desirable and useful of all undertakings. . . . Would to God that I might soon start a similar foundation!"⁴⁴ On no other project did he labor more persistently, but his plans went through frequent changes and long delays before he achieved a memorable success.

In 1831 he launched his first campaign for this purpose, in an effort to obtain financial help from France, Rome, and Austria. Though no large returns flowed in immediately, next year, when a tempting offer was made him, he bought, by bor-

⁴² John B. Clarke, *Manchester: a Brief Record of Its Past and a Picture of Its Present* (*ibid.*, 1875), p. 120. On the Lowell experiment, cf. (Rt. Rev.) Louis S. Walsh, *The Early Irish Catholic Schools of Lowell, Massachusetts, 1835-1852* (Publications of the New England Catholic Historical Society, no. 2, Boston, 1901); George F. O'Dwyer, *The Irish Catholic Genesis of Lowell* (*ibid.*, 1920), chap. III.

⁴³ Letter to Rt. Rev. Edward Fenwick, July 19, 1830 (*Arch., University of Notre Dame*).

⁴⁴ Letter of April 6, 1831, in Very Rev. V. F. O'Daniel, O.P., *The Right Rev. Edward Dominic Fenwick, O.P.* (2nd ed.: New York, Cincinnati, 1921), pp. 395 f.

rowing, the land next the Cathedral rectory, on the corner of Franklin and Federal Streets, for \$11,500, congratulating himself that he still had courage enough to sleep soundly in spite of that great debt.⁴⁵ Not till three years later could he proceed, with the subsidies received from France, to erect the four-story building intended for a college and seminary. By the end of 1835, at any rate, this work was finished, and the *Catholic Directory* for the following year contained a notice about the "Seminary of the Holy Cross" as if the institution were already functioning. In reality, however, the hastily constructed edifice at once required repairs, which were not completed until May, 1836, and then, for mysterious reasons, the opening of the seminary was indefinitely postponed. The most probable explanation of this decision is the lack of clergymen available for the teaching staff, in view of the incessantly growing demand for priests on the mission.⁴⁶ For two years the Bishop waited, meanwhile leasing the seminary building for a private dwelling, and then in 1838 he went over to a very different plan.

By this time he was in the full flush of enthusiasm over his colony at Benedicta. Always convinced that a quiet nook in the country was a better place than the city for developing ecclesiastical vocations, and concerned also about finding a spot where living would be cheapest, Bishop Fenwick decided to found his college and seminary in his "paradise on the Moluncus." That he long thought seriously of establishing such institutions in the remotest corner of his diocese, in the wilderness of northeastern Maine, is, perhaps, of all his plans the one most open to criticism. It may be recalled, however, that in this same year Bishop Dubois, of New York, was establishing his seminary at Lafargeville, in the most rural and remote part of *his* diocese, and this example, as well as the success of secluded Emmitsburg and of various other sylvan seminaries, may well have had their effect on Bishop Fenwick.

⁴⁵ *Memoranda*, April 2, 1832; letter to Bishop Rosati, April 24, 1832, in *Ill. Cath. Hist. Rev.*, X (1927), 149 f.

⁴⁶ This was Bishop Fenwick's explanation in his report to the *Association de la Propagation de la Foi*, Dec. 13, 1836: in *Annales*, X (1837), 148.

At all events, in the summer of 1838 he began to regale his correspondents with glowing accounts of the new enterprise, which, he hoped, would one day afford his diocese an ample supply of native clergy. A college building, begun in 1839, was virtually completed by the end of 1841 — a wooden, two-story edifice, measuring eighty feet by forty-two, and crowned by a cupola. Five hundred acres of land were set off as a “college farm,” while the income from the saw and grist mills was to furnish additional funds for the institution. An observatory was planned for. The *Catholic Directories* for 1840 and 1841 contained notices of the new college and seminary, whose opening was anticipated for the summer of 1842.

Before that time arrived, however, the Bishop's thoughts were diverted into new channels — or rather into a new form of an old project. As a loyal son of St. Ignatius, he had, ever since coming to Boston, intensely desired to establish the Society of Jesus in his diocese. He had hoped especially that the Order might be induced to revive its missions in Maine, which had had so glorious a history in colonial days. When he contrived to obtain Father Virgil Barber, S.J., for two years as a missionary among the Penobscots, or when in 1833 he erected a monument to the martyred Father Rasle, S.J., at Norridgewock, he was probably actuated in part by the desire to draw the attention of his old associates in that direction. Hitherto, unfortunately, the directors of the Maryland Province had not felt able to accept his ever-repeated solicitations. In June, 1842, however, word reached him that the group of French Jesuits who had recently arrived in Montreal, expecting to establish themselves there, had been disappointed, and were now resolved to remove to the United States if a suitable offer were made to them. Tempted by this un hoped-for opportunity to realize a long-cherished project, Bishop Fenwick at once wrote to Father Chazelle, the leader of this group, to beg them to come into the Diocese of Boston, offering to turn over to them the college at Benedicta and as many Maine missions as they might care to accept.⁴⁷ Before this letter reached Montreal,

⁴⁷ *Memoranda*, June 27, 1842; Bishop Fenwick to Rev. George Fenwick, S.J., July 6, 1842 (*Fordham Arch.*, 213 H 6).

however, such difficulties as may have existed there had been surmounted. Father Chazelle very wisely refused to allow himself to be diverted into the wilds of the Aroostook from the historic work he had undertaken, which was, in fact, to lead to the restoration of the Jesuit Order in Canada.

The Bishop then reverted to the idea of bringing in his old friends from Maryland. During Father McElroy's stay in Boston in August that matter must have been discussed more than once, with the talk sometimes ranging far afield as to the perspectives for the Society in this Diocese. The establishment of the Jesuits in the city of Boston; the foundation by them of a college for day-students; the turning over to them, in order to furnish revenues for the college, of St. Mary's Church, or even of the Cathedral itself, if a new Cathedral was to be built — such appear to have been some of the themes of these conversations.⁴⁸ Most of this was, of course, only *Zukunftsmusik*. For the more prosaic present, the immediate upshot of these talks was that on the day after the close of the Synod the Bishop wrote to Father Dzierozynski, the Provincial in Maryland, a letter in which he assured him of his earnest desire to see the Society permanently established in his diocese, and offered for that purpose to transfer to it the "splendid" college building at Benedicta, the mills and all the unsold land there (about two thousand acres), and the missions of the entire State of Maine.⁴⁹ This offer he begged to have transmitted to the General of the Order in Rome.

Soon afterwards Bishop Fenwick came into possession of another embryonic college. Not long after settling at Worcester, Father Fitton had purchased, in 1836, fifty-two acres of land on the southwestern outskirts of that city, on the eminence called by the Indians Mount Pakachoag, "the hill of pleasant springs."⁵⁰ Here, after erecting a modest but adequate building, that zealous missionary had opened "Mount Saint James

⁴⁸ Father McElroy to Bishop Fenwick, Jan. 7, 1843 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*); Father McElroy to Bishop Blanc, of New Orleans, Dec. 17, 1847 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

⁴⁹ Letter of Aug. 27, 1842 (*Fordham Arch.*, 213 H 9-10).

⁵⁰ Jan. 22, 1836 (*Worcester Deeds*, book 312, p. 494).

Academy." For six years Father Fitton, with the aid of the devoted convert-schoolmaster from Hartford, Joseph Brigden, had conducted this school with considerable success. Students came in fair numbers from New England, New York, Philadelphia, and even from as far as New Orleans and Texas.⁵¹ For its proper development, however, the institution needed ampler resources and closer attention than the overworked pastor of Worcester could give. Father Fitton had intended to offer it to the Bishop, but, to his delight, the latter anticipated him by suggesting the transfer. This arrangement, agreed upon in September, 1842, was formally completed only on February 2, 1843, when Father Fitton gratuitously conveyed the Mount St. James property to Bishop Fenwick, subject only to a mortgage for fifteen hundred dollars held by the Worcester Savings Bank.⁵²

While the Bishop, ever since his first visit to Pakachoag in 1836, had shown an interest in the school and had augured that "sooner or later something would grow out of it useful to the Church,"⁵³ there is no means of telling when or precisely why he decided to make Worcester, rather than Benedicta, his principal educational centre. At any rate, during the last months of 1842 his plans were: to erect in the following year a large college and seminary at Mount St. James, the faculty to be composed of diocesan priests; to turn over Benedicta to the Jesuits, if they would take it, in the hope that they would build up a second college there, and, above all, would make it a centre for far-flung missions in Maine; and, if they would not take it, to transform the intended college building into an orphan asylum and farm school.⁵⁴

The first replies received from Maryland were not too encouraging. The Provincial, while reporting that the General had evinced a very serious wish to comply with the Bishop's intentions about a settlement of the Society in the Diocese,

⁵¹ Compare the list of prize-winners given in *The Pilot*, Aug. 8, 1840.

⁵² Father Fitton to Bishop Fenwick, Sept. 17, 1842 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*): *Worcester Deeds*, book 373, p. 365.

⁵³ *Memoranda*, Aug. 8, 1836.

⁵⁴ Letters to Father George Fenwick, S.J., Oct. 3, Dec. 8, 1842 (*Fordham Arch.*, 213 G 4, 5).

added that nothing could be decided without fuller information as to how, when, and where Dr. Fenwick proposed to begin an establishment for them.⁵⁵ Father McElroy, writing as an old friend, expressed the strong conviction that the best plan would be a college for day-students in the heart of Boston, preferably alongside the Cathedral.⁵⁶ In his intense anxiety to secure the Order for the Diocese, Bishop Fenwick then made his "grand offer." Answering Father Dzierzynski on January 11, 1843, he repeated all that he had previously said about Benedicta and Maine missions, but promised in addition to give the Society the splendid college which he was resolved to build at Worcester that year.⁵⁷ Still the Jesuits hesitated. With them it was, very naturally, a question of making the labors of the few men they had available go as far as possible. Since the same number of teachers could, it was thought, handle five to ten times as many students in a day-school as in a boarding-college, the Consultors very much preferred the former arrangement. Hence the Provincial's reply expressed a willingness to consider Worcester only as a day-school, while maintaining complete silence about Maine.⁵⁸ This time, however, the Bishop stood by his guns. With him it was primarily a question of fostering ecclesiastical vocations, and he was convinced that that could best be done in a boarding-college in a secluded spot in the country, such as he conceived Mount St. James to be. In his next letter to Father Dzierzynski, he strongly affirmed this position, while admitting that a Jesuit college for externs in Boston was most desirable and ought to come later. For the present he begged that a few members of the Society be sent at once to help him start the boarding-college which he had already contracted to build at Worcester.⁵⁹ This appeal carried home. While leaving to the General, of course, the final decision about accepting the proposed college,

⁵⁵ Undated draft of letter (received by Bishop Fenwick Jan. 9, 1843) in *Fordham Arch.*, 214 Z 1.

⁵⁶ Letter of Jan. 7, 1843 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁵⁷ *Fordham Arch.*, 214 Z 3.

⁵⁸ Father Dzierzynski, S.J., to Bishop Fenwick, Jan. 25, 1843 (*ibid.*, 214 Z 4).

⁵⁹ Feb. 4, 1843 (*ibid.*, 214 Z 5).

Father Dzierzynski decided to coöperate in the meantime by sending, first Father Thomas Mulledy, formerly President of Georgetown University, and later other Jesuits, to Bishop Fenwick's assistance.⁶⁰

Henceforth *Benedicta* (and the missions of Maine) utterly dropped out of the discussions. The "college building" there, after serving as a parish hall and town school for many years, was dismantled in 1871, except for one wing, which was used as a rectory until a few years ago.

At Worcester on June 21, 1843, the cornerstone of the new "College of the Holy Cross" — so named, of course, in honor of the Boston Cathedral — was laid with great éclat. Even the President of the United States had been invited, although he could not attend. On that fine morning an imposing procession wound its way from the Worcester railroad station to Mount St. James, with band playing and banners flying. It included the Bishop, eleven priests — among them Father John McCloskey, who was one day to be Cardinal Archbishop of New York — most of the Catholics of the town, the Irish societies, and invited guests. Before this throng, swelled at Mount Pakachoag by crowds of curious Protestants, Bishop Fenwick laid the cornerstone with all prescribed solemnities. Thereupon the Rev. Dr. Charles Constantine Pise, of New York, the most eloquent Catholic orator of that time, delivered an impressive and irenic address, in which he dwelt upon the Church's zeal for education, the splendid record of the Jesuits as teachers, and the perfect harmony between the Catholic faith and the free institutions of America. It was well to strike so conciliatory a note, for the founding of the first Catholic college — and a Jesuit one at that — was sure to arouse a considerable emotion in New England. The most friendly of the non-Catholic newspapers, in commenting on the event, would scarcely go further than to say that if Dr. Pise's liberal professions were lived up to, the new institution would do no harm, though it was surely not needed, since this region already had so many fine colleges.⁶¹ The Evangelical press, of course, was

⁶⁰ Father Dzierzynski, S.J., to the General, Feb. —, 1843 (*ibid.*, 214 Z 7).

⁶¹ Cf. *Boston Daily Advertiser*, June 22, 1843.

deeply stirred over this "attempt on New England," and over seeing "the Man of Sin" establishing a citadel in the very heart of Massachusetts.⁶²

Under the Bishop's driving hand, the creation of the new college went forward rapidly. Through a further purchase, the grounds were enlarged to include eighty-four acres. Father Fitton's wooden academy building, seventy feet in length, could still be of use — indeed, a part of it is in service today; and so could the more ancient farmhouse that stood near the Blackstone. In addition there now arose a splendid four-story brick structure, measuring 108 feet by 48, which the Bishop pronounced "one of the most beautiful and at the same time one of the most solid and convenient buildings the Society was ever in possession of."⁶³ That building with its furnishings must have cost him about twenty-five thousand dollars. To it he gave his savings of the past twenty years.⁶⁴

Though this edifice was not entirely completed until January, 1844, the college was opened, quite without ceremony, on November 1, 1843. The original faculty consisted of six members: Father Thomas Mulledy, S.J., Rector; Father George Fenwick, S.J. (the Bishop's brother), Prefect of Studies and Professor of Rhetoric; Father James Power, S.J., Professor of Mathematics; one scholastic and two lay teachers. Only twelve students presented themselves at the outset.

From these modest beginnings Holy Cross College developed in most encouraging fashion in the next three years. By the close of its founder's life, it had six Jesuit priests and three scholastics as teachers, and about one hundred students. Most of its *clientèle* came from a long distance; many from Maryland and Washington, and some even from Canada or Louisiana. As far as food, lodging, and amusements were concerned, student life must have been of Spartan simplicity; but there was no mean intellectual activity if one may judge by the Exhibition

⁶² *Boston Observer*, June 29, 1843; *Christian Watchman*, June 30; *Zion's Herald*, July 5.

⁶³ Bishop Fenwick to Rev. T. Ryder, S.J., Sept. 19, 1843 (*Fordham Arch.*, 214 T 8).

⁶⁴ *Memoranda* (by Bishop Fitzpatrick), July 28, 1852.

exercises at the close of each year, when admiring audiences were regaled for three to five hours with poems, dialogues, moral or philosophical disquisitions, orations on classical models, and speeches in Latin, Greek, French, Spanish, or Italian.

The Bishop watched over the college with the most fatherly care, visiting it constantly and lending it every help in his power. It was the pride and joy of his later years, as Mount Benedict had been in earlier days; and undoubtedly it was his greatest creation. Since it offered an ecclesiastical course along with others, it represented the fulfillment of his most cherished ambition, to have both a college and a seminary. It also realized the wish of which he spoke to his Cathedral congregation, of leaving behind him some "legacy to his diocese";⁶⁵ and the wish also to 'do something for the Society [of Jesus] before he died' and to assure it a firm foothold in New England.⁶⁶ He had the satisfaction of regulating the status of the college definitively less than a week before his death. His last official act was to convey Holy Cross and all its property gratuitously to the President and Directors of Georgetown College (which meant to the Jesuit Province of Maryland).⁶⁷

How much more he would have liked to do for the Society comes out in various letters. There can be no doubt that he intended to bring them to Boston for the purpose of establishing a college for day-students. Hence the present Boston College, too, may regard him as at heart its spiritual progenitor.⁶⁸ As regards the means for carrying out this project, he may at times have talked of turning over to the Jesuits his Cathedral;⁶⁹ but it is likely that his more settled plan was to establish them

⁶⁵ *Memoranda*, June 18, 1848.

⁶⁶ Bishop Fenwick to Father Dziezozynski, S.J., Jan. 11, 1843 (*Fordham Arch.*, 214 Z 3).

⁶⁷ *Worcester Deeds*, book 413, p. 447 (Aug. 6, 1846).

⁶⁸ Bishop Fenwick to Father T. Mulledy, S.J., June 19, 1846: "The putting up of this wing [at Holy Cross] will not in the least interfere with the establishment I intend for the Society in Boston" (*Woodstock Letters*, XXXV, 1906, pp. 396 f.).

⁶⁹ Father T. Mulledy, S.J., to the General, Nov. 8-17, 1843 (*Georgetown Coll. Arch.*, 95-4) — a letter of which the Bishop is said to have approved every word — describes this as almost decided upon at that time.

at St. Mary's in the North End, as his successor very quickly did.⁷⁰

VII

Of Bishop Fenwick's love and concern for the poor there are many indications. In the first place, he gave without stint from his own means to help the distressed members of his flock. One who knew him well wrote after his death: "He was especially the father of the poor. He gave everything he had, even from the very considerable estate he had inherited, and if all were not amply provided for, it was only because his purse was not so large as his heart."⁷¹ His settlement at *Benedicta* is another example of his care for the Catholic poor of Boston. When approached on the subject by the Rev. Joseph Tuckerman, Unitarian minister-at-large, a zealous friend of the afflicted of all kinds and creeds, he readily entered into the idea of appointing one or more priests to the work of visiting and ministering to the needs of all the poor Catholic families of the city. Unfortunately, however, the time never came when he had priests to spare for this purpose.⁷² Much could be done, at any rate, and was done, as will be described later, by benevolent societies of laymen, of which the Bishop was a warm sponsor. But his greatest achievement in the field of charity was the establishment of St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum, one of his finest creations.

The thought of such a foundation seems to have been with him from the beginning of his episcopate. In launching *The Jesuit* in 1829, he announced that any profits realized from this paper would be devoted to starting an orphan asylum; but, unhappily, few or no profits were realized. Three years later he decided to bring some Sisters of Charity to Boston, hoping that their presence and example would stimulate donations and

⁷⁰ Father McElroy, S.J., to Bishop Blanc, Dec. 17, 1847, declares that this had been Bishop Fenwick's plan since 1842 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

⁷¹ *Metropolitan Catholic Almanac for 1850*, p. 67.

⁷² Rev. Daniel T. McColgan, *Joseph Tuckerman: Pioneer in American Social Work* (Diss., Cath. Univ. of America: Washington, 1940), pp. 127 ff.

hasten the fulfillment of his plans. On May 2, 1832, there arrived from the mother-house at Emmitsburg — the community founded by the famous Mother Seton — the first three of these nuns: Sister Ann Alexis (Shorb), Sister Blandina (Davaux), and Sister Loyola (Ritchie). They took up their residence in a house leased for them by the Bishop in Hamilton Street, off Fort Hill.⁷³

Their principal duties at the outset were to conduct a free day-school for poor girls and to teach the female pupils in the Sunday school. Almost at once, however, a few orphan girls were placed in their care. This began when the Bishop, having discovered a penniless family, consisting of a demented mother deserted by her husband, and her boy and girl, brought the girl to the Sisters and begged them to take her, while he himself would look after the boy. This first pitiful waif taken in by the nuns later became a Sister of Charity.⁷⁴

Left through the driving-out of the Ursulines as for many years the only nuns in Boston, and regarded at first with such hostility that it was considered dangerous for them to appear in the streets unattended, the Sisters soon won the respect and, indeed, the affection of the community through their beautiful and blameless lives and their so obviously useful activities. Fourteen years after their arrival a newspaper notorious for its anti-Catholic prejudice was writing: "In the whole world — no matter what sect or creed it may be — there exists not a more glorious set of beings than the Sisters of Charity; the sick and the poor claim their undivided attention, and they are continually doing good." ⁷⁵ Aided by such rising sympathies, the "Sisters' Fairs" held in 1833, 1839, and 1841 were most gratifyingly successful in building up a fund for an orphanage asylum. Already in 1838 the increasing number of the children under their care had obliged the Sisters to remove to a larger house in Atkinson (now Congress) Street. In 1841 the Bishop bought for them for eleven thousand dollars a still more capacious house at the corner of Pearl and High Streets. In 1843

⁷³ Not, as has often been stated, in Hamilton Place, near Tremont Street.

⁷⁴ *Pilot*, March 13, 1875.

⁷⁵ *Boston Daily Bee*, Jan. 9, 1846.

"St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum" was incorporated by act of the General Court.⁷⁶ Two years later even larger quarters were needed, and a new house was acquired on Purchase Street for eighteen thousand dollars.⁷⁷ By this time, although the Sisters continued their initial activities, the care of orphan girls had become the most important part of their work. The high degree of success which they had attained was due, in large part, to the exceptional executive ability and the winning, gracious personality of Sister Ann Alexis, who, save for one brief interval, was to remain for over forty years at the head of the institution and who was to leave one of the most splendid names in the history of American charity.⁷⁸

An orphan asylum for boys was also one of Bishop Fenwick's ambitions. For some years he hoped to establish one at Benedicta, combined with a farm school. Failing in this, he had, at least, the satisfaction of seeing the zealous Father Flood, pastor of St. Mary's, Boston, establish a parochial asylum of this kind, although, unfortunately, this institution was not to last for many years.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ March 23, 1843 (*Acts of 1843*, chapter 44).

⁷⁷ *Memoranda*, March 4, 10, 1845.

⁷⁸ When she died March 19, 1875, she was "the oldest and the most worthily beloved Sister of Charity in the United States" (*Pilot*, March 27, 1875).

⁷⁹ The lot and house for St. Mary's Male Orphan Asylum in Stillman Street, Boston, were purchased early in 1846 for \$6,000 (*Memoranda*, Feb. 16, 1846).

CHAPTER XII

PRESS, LAITY, CONVERTS

I

WHILE THE SUPPORT of a Catholic press is by no means easy even today, it was vastly more difficult a century ago, when Catholics were relatively few and poor. What alone made possible the rise of Catholic journals at that time was the existence of several needs that were felt more keenly then than later: the need, especially, of organs through which to defend the Faith against the incessant, violent, and exasperating attacks that were being rained upon it; and the desire of a Catholic population chiefly made up of recent Irish immigrants for the latest and fullest news from the land of their birth. In this part of the country at least, Catholic and Irish-American journalism were almost synonymous terms.

New England was one of the first regions to witness the emergence of Catholic weekly newspapers. The beginning was made, as we have already seen, when in July, 1829, Francis Taylor, probably inspired by the success of the *United States Catholic Miscellany*, of Charleston, South Carolina, in which city he was then residing, established the *Catholic Press* at Hartford, his birthplace. Bishop Fenwick, as we have also seen, appears to have been so much impressed by his visit to Hartford that summer that soon after his return to Boston he began — on September 5, 1829 — the publication of *The Jesuit, or Catholic Sentinel*, a newspaper which, continued, with only slight interruptions, under the name of *The Pilot*, now ranks as the oldest Catholic paper in the United States. In March of the following year he also launched *The Expostulator, or Young Catholic's Guide*, a weekly intended to explain the Church's doctrines to children. This was the first Catholic juvenile newspaper published in this country. Of this, as of

The Jesuit, the Bishop was proprietor and chief editor; and as he also appears to have supervised the *Catholic Press* in a general way, he was thus, in 1830, trying to direct three journals.

Three of them were probably more than he had time for, and certainly more than the small Catholic reading public could support. After rounding out one year of meritorious service, *The Expostulator* was discontinued.¹ The *Catholic Press* maintained itself for three and a half years, improving steadily as it went along, and acquiring a considerable reputation and circulation throughout the country. While Father O'Cavanagh and, after him, Father Fitton bore the brunt of the editorial work, the ownership of the paper long rested with the Taylors and other laymen of Hartford, grouped together in what was called "The Catholic Tract Society" or "The Association." In the spring of 1832, however, something of a disagreement arose. Francis H. Taylor proposed to transfer the *Press* to St. Louis, where greater backing might be expected, while Father Fitton and Alfred Talley, the publisher, insisted on continuing the enterprise at Hartford. The upshot was that these last two gentlemen bought up the ownership of the paper; the Association was dissolved, and Taylor departed for St. Louis to start *The Shepherd of the Valley*.² Nevertheless, in spite of brave efforts to enlarge and improve the *Press*, the new proprietors soon found the burden too much for them. In the latter months of 1832 they were negotiating with Bishop Kenrick, of Philadelphia, who was contemplating starting a newspaper, about taking over their journal, with its printing press, its subscribers, and its debts. These negotiations broke down over the debts, presumably. At the beginning of 1833 the *Catholic Herald* of Philadelphia made its quite independent appearance; and the *Catholic Press*, after struggling along for a

¹ It ran from March 31, 1830, to March 23, 1831. A file of it may be found in the library of Georgetown University, and at St. John's Seminary, Brighton, Mass.

² Rev. John Rothensteiner, *History of the Archdiocese of St. Louis* (2 vols.: *ibid.*, 1928), I, 530, II, 163 f.; *Cath. Press*, May 3, 1832; *U.S. Cath. Miscellany*, June 16, 1832. Visiting Hartford the following summer, Bishop Fenwick appears to have restored the Association (*Memoranda*, Aug. 5, 1832), but it is not clear whether, as revived, it was more than an auxiliary society.

few numbers, went out of existence, leaving Father Fitton one thousand dollars in debt for his attempt to champion the Catholic cause in the land of the Puritans.³

The Jesuit alone maintained itself, though not without various changes of name, management, and character. Bishop Fenwick originally intended that it should differ from all other Catholic newspapers in that it was to be devoted exclusively to religious topics, and that all the numbers should be linked together in such a way as to form a complete demonstration of the truths of the Faith. This rather severely theological diet evidently failed to attract a sufficient number of subscribers. After two years' experience the Bishop was persuaded to try what every other Catholic editor had learned was necessary: to introduce Irish news in addition to Catholic news. Hence the third volume of the newspaper bore the name *United States Catholic Intelligencer*, since the old title was thought appropriate only to a purely religious journal.⁴ As the change did not, however, seem to help much, in 1833, Bishop Fenwick restored the original name and substantially the original character of the paper.⁵ Still, adequate support was lacking, and the Bishop was evidently more and more convinced that to edit and manage a journal required far more time than he could properly give. Hence, at the end of 1834, *The Jesuit* was in danger of being discontinued altogether, when Patrick Donahoe and Henry L. Devereux came forward and bought it.

Patrick Donahoe, who here began a remarkable career in

³ Although Father Fitton (*Sketches*, pp. 193 f.) asserted that the *Catholic Press* was transferred to Philadelphia and was continued under the name of the *Catholic Herald*—a statement that has been repeated by various writers—it seems certain that no such merger took place (cf. *Catholic Herald*, Jan. 3, Feb. 28, 1833). The *Press* contains so many precious items about the growth of the Church in New England and elsewhere that it is regrettable that there seem to be so few files of it still in existence. Georgetown University possesses a very incomplete file running from July 25, 1829, to Dec. 20, 1832. The St. Louis University Library is said to have four volumes of it, extending to the end of 1832. The Congregational House, Boston, has the first two volumes, and fragments are to be found in many places.

⁴ *The Jesuit*—under the original title—ran from Sept. 5, 1829, to Aug. 27, 1831. The *U.S. Catholic Intelligencer* ran from Oct. 1, 1831, to Sept. 21, 1832.

⁵ After the conclusion of the 3rd volume (Sept. 21, 1832), there was a brief interruption. Vol. IV (called *The Jesuit*) began Jan. 5, 1833.

journalism which was to run on for nearly seventy years, was born at Munnery, County Cavan, March 17, 1811. Coming to Boston with his father at the age of ten, he enjoyed a few years' schooling, and then in 1825 began to learn the printer's trade, working successively for the *Columbian Centinel*, the *Transcript*, and *The Jesuit*. The last-named paper had since 1831 been printed by Devereux, a Protestant Irishman, who, about the time he took over its ownership, entered into a business partnership with young Donahoe, who had hitherto been his employee.⁶

Inevitably, the paper changed its character. Preponderantly and almost exclusively a religious journal while under Bishop Fenwick, it henceforth devoted itself primarily to Irish-American interests, although still giving much Church news and being always ready to defend the Faith against attacks. During the first year of the new management, the paper was called *The Literary and Catholic Sentinel*. In 1836, however, it assumed the title of the *Boston Pilot*—a now historic name, whose original significance lay in the fact that the *Dublin Pilot* was then the chief organ of Daniel O'Connell and his movement.

As editor the new owners had, at the outset, engaged George Pepper. The latter, born in the County Louth in 1792, had been obliged, because of his philippics against the British Government, to flee to America, and for half a dozen years had conducted various Irish-American journals in New York and Philadelphia. Not without talent, widely read, aflame with love for Ireland, and often really eloquent when he dwelt upon her glories and misfortunes, Pepper suffered from an irascible and violent temper, a passion for sonorous declamation which often degenerated into wild bombast and vituperation, and an utter lack of judgment and balance. An editor who was capable of berating the Pilgrim Fathers as "that atrocious and impious band of sanguinary and ignorant fanatics,"⁷ and who casti-

⁶ On Patrick Donahoe's life, see, especially, the obituary articles in *The Pilot*, March 23, 30, 1901; *Boston Transcript*, March 18, 1901; and the letters of reminiscences written by him to Martin I. J. Griffin, in *U.S. Cath. Hist. Soc., Records and Studies*, XV (1904), 314-317.

⁷ *Sentinel*, May 30, 1835.

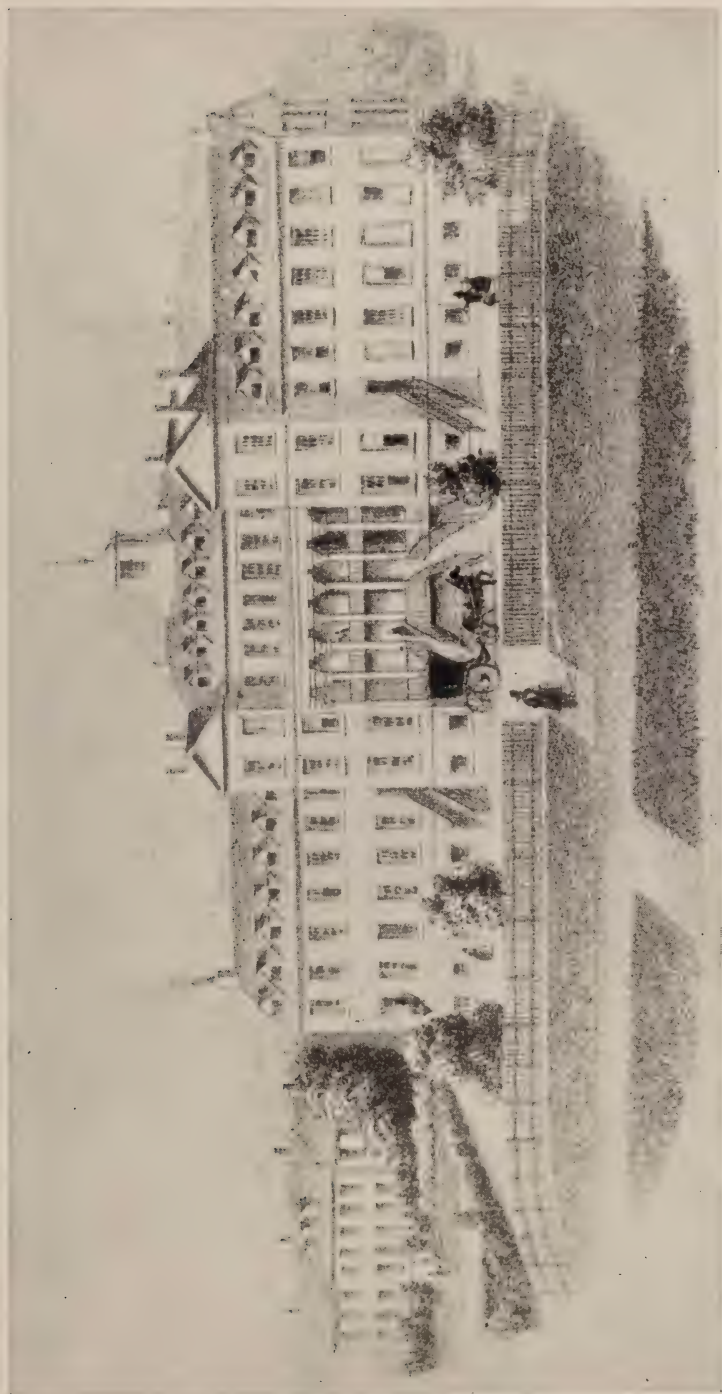
gated almost all the other Boston newspapers in still stronger terms, naturally aroused intense exasperation among Protestants and condemnation from Catholics as well. He was nicknamed "Pepper-pot," or — in allusion to his notorious weakness — "John Peppercorn." To restrain or offset his excesses, he was, in 1836, given a co-editor in the person of Dr. John Stephen Bartlett, a close friend but a man of entirely different stripe. The son of an eminent Unitarian minister of Marblehead, and graduated from the Harvard Medical School in 1831, Dr. Bartlett had found his way into the Catholic Church by long and serious study, in 1835. Henceforth for the rest of his short life ⁸ this young surgeon, equally distinguished for gifts of mind and character, was to devote all the time and effort that could be spared from a busy practice to the service of the Church. As religious editor of *The Pilot* he displayed both a sound and deep knowledge of the Faith remarkable in so recent a convert, and a moderate, dignified, and always courteous tone towards opponents which made a refreshing contrast to Pepper's tirades.

Towards the end of 1836 both editors — for reasons at which we can only guess — resigned from *The Pilot*, and announced that they would shortly begin a newspaper of their own.⁹ Donahoe kept his journal going until January 7, 1837, when, unwilling or unable to face competition, he surrendered the field. Two days before, Pepper and Bartlett had launched *The Emerald Isle*, a weekly devoted to the cause of Ireland and "the defense of the rights of adopted citizens." It lasted barely three months, however. On April 1st it had to be suspended because of Pepper's failing health, and on May 11th he died. Over his grave in Bunker Hill Cemetery a monument was later erected by Irish-American citizens of Boston, who, whatever his faults may have been, did not soon forget one whose life had been a continuous, valiant, and unflinching struggle for every Irish cause.¹⁰

⁸ He died suddenly March 13, 1840, at the age of twenty-nine.

⁹ *Pilot*, Nov. 12, 19, 1836.

¹⁰ A file of *The Emerald Isle* (Jan. 5 to April 1, 1837) is to be found in the library of the University of Notre Dame, and — in microfilm copy — at St. John's Seminary, Brighton.



HOLY CROSS COLLEGE IN ITS EARLIEST YEARS

After nine months, during which Boston was left without any Catholic or Irish paper, at the beginning of 1838 Donahoe revived *The Pilot*, whose uninterrupted existence dates from that time. The resumption required a certain amount of courage. Hitherto no Catholic paper in this vicinity had paid for itself. Donahoe had then but little money; and while Devereux stood by him during the first year, in 1839 he gave up his share in the paper and broke off their partnership in business. A very young man, without much formal schooling, obliged to serve as news-gatherer, editor, printer, and circulation agent, assisted only by two girls and an office boy, Donahoe had for some years an uphill fight. But he had faith and a rare instinct for business, and fortune favored him. The ever-growing number of his compatriots in New England, the Native American agitation, the renewal of the Repeal movement, and the exciting course of events in Ireland — all these things increased the demand for such a paper. The restored *Pilot* was, in general, conducted with skill and prudence. Thanks to agents abroad who forwarded British and Irish papers with every packet, and thanks especially to the fact that in 1840 Boston became the American terminus of the first transatlantic steamship line, *The Pilot* soon became preëminent among Catholic journals for the quickness and fullness of its Irish and European news. It usually avoided religious polemics, but when called upon to defend Catholic or Irish-American interests, it generally did so with vigor and without vituperation. Through resident or itinerant subscription agents, it steadily built up its circulation. If at the end of 1838 it had but 680 subscribers, six years later it boasted 7,000, and four times as many readers.¹¹

Such success naturally aroused emulation. Already in 1838 one William Comstock attempted for a short time to publish in Boston a pro-Irish and anti-Nativist paper called *The Wanderer*.¹² During most of the year 1840 that admirable convert, Dr. Henry B. C. Greene, edited a new juvenile weekly entitled

¹¹ *Pilot*, Dec. 22, 1838; Dec. 21, 1844.

¹² *Ibid.*, Jan. 27, Feb. 17, 1838. Only four numbers seem to have appeared.

The Young Catholic's Friend.¹³ In October, 1841, James B. Clinton started *The New England Reporter and Catholic Diary*, which, first issued at Lowell but soon transferred to Boston, for some years offered *The Pilot* very serious competition, especially after it took on as assistant editor in 1843 an Irish journalist of some distinction named John R. Fitzgerald.¹⁴ Rhode Island, too, saw a brief experiment in Catholic journalism when in the spring of 1843 the *Providence Catholic Layman* appeared in two diminutive numbers and then collapsed for lack of support.¹⁵

In the spring of 1844 *The Pilot* obtained its first editor of unmistakable literary genius — and therewith began the stormiest year in its history. The new editor was Thomas D'Arcy McGee. There are few stranger careers in the nineteenth century than that of this poet, orator, journalist, historian, and statesman who, in a brief span of forty-three years, managed to live three lives: as the patriot and revolutionist in Ireland, the exile in America, and the co-founder of the Dominion of Canada, assassinated by a fanatic because of his newfound loyalty to the British crown. Born at Carlingford, County Louth, in 1825, "Tommy" McGee had grown up a typical boy prodigy and Romanticist rebel. From his talented mother, who died when he was eight years old, he imbibed a passionate love of Ireland, her history, poetry, and legends; and this came to be coupled with a Byronic cult of liberty. Bereavements and misfortunes saddened his youth, but developed his mental powers prematurely. By the age of seventeen he was, more through his own efforts than by schooling, immensely well-read, was writing surprisingly good verse, and was locally known as a public speaker. In 1842 this precocious but penniless and homeless idealist, along with his sister, came to America on a timber ship to seek food and shelter from an aunt in Providence.

¹³ The Boston Athenaeum possesses a file of this excellent little paper, running from May 6 to Dec. 26, 1840 (vol. I, nos. 1-33). Presumably, this is all of it that was published.

¹⁴ As far as I know, only one very incomplete file of this newspaper exists today (in private hands). Of this file, running from Aug. 3, 1843, to March 20, 1845, St. John's Seminary has a microfilm copy.

¹⁵ *Pilot*, May 6, 1843; *The Catholic Church in New England*, I, 392.

Some weeks after arriving, the boy went to Boston to look for a job. On the Fourth of July he stood in a dense throng outside Faneuil Hall while the Declaration of Independence was read and the orator of the day delivered a discourse. No sooner was that oration over than young McGee, carried away by enthusiasm for American liberty, jumped upon a cart and for half an hour poured forth his soul in an impromptu speech which amazed and delighted the crowd — the more so as no one could identify this “little curly-headed Paddy.”¹⁶ The next day Patrick Donahoe met him and, recognizing in him the boy orator of the Fourth, gave him a clerical position in the office of *The Pilot*.

Henceforth the young immigrant's rise was rapid and spectacular. Before the end of the year he was commissioned to tour New England as traveling agent and special correspondent of the paper. This gave him an opportunity to assemble the Irish colony in each community and address them, not only about *The Pilot*, but about the situation in Ireland, O'Connell's great fight for Repeal, and all the hopes and fears that agitated their native land. In spite of his youth and his unprepossessing appearance — he had such negroid features that his enemies called him “Darky McGee” — he possessed all the magnetism of the born orator, and he seems to have held his audiences enthralled. Such were the celebrity and prestige that he quickly attained that in April, 1844, he was promoted to be junior editor of *The Pilot* — at the age of nineteen.

During the thirteen months that he held this position McGee undoubtedly raised the paper to a high standard of literary excellence. His work attracted attention in Ireland, and Daniel O'Connell publicly praised one of his editorials as “the inspired writing of a young exiled Irish boy in America.”¹⁷ Unfortunately, however, youthful genius is not always combined with moderation and discretion. It was neither generous nor

¹⁶ Henry J. O'C. Clarke, *A Short Sketch of the Life of the Hon. Thomas D'Arcy McGee* (Montreal, 1868), pp. 9 f.; Isabel Skelton, *The Life of Thomas D'Arcy McGee* (Gardenvale, 1925), pp. 10 f.

¹⁷ Skelton, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

prudent for a recently arrived immigrant to descant upon the "awful career," the "narrowness of soul," and the "grotesque theology" of the "pioneer fanatics" who had founded New England.¹⁸ After the sanguinary anti-Catholic riots and church-burnings in Philadelphia, McGee, in the heat of righteous indignation, penned a terrific editorial, which branded — or at least seemed to brand — all native-born Americans as "cowards and sons of cowards."¹⁹ Breaking away from the neutrality which *The Pilot* had hitherto maintained as between the two great political parties, he threw himself into the campaign of the autumn with fire and fury against the Whigs, on the ground that their candidate for Vice-President, Theodore Frelinghuysen, had publicly allied himself with the enemies of the Catholic Church.

It has already been pointed out how exasperating to the Whigs was the defeat of their national ticket in 1844, chiefly, as they supposed, through Irish-American votes. Some weeks before the election their organs began to thunder against *The Pilot*, and to threaten that if "foreigners" on American soil did not repress their "arrogance and assumption" and cease their "base attacks," Boston might be the scene of a worse conflagration than Philadelphia had witnessed.²⁰ In the days just before the voting in Massachusetts (which took place on Monday, November 11th), the decisive Democratic victory in New York was already known and the rage of the Whigs was at the boiling point. The Catholic clergy were freely — and falsely — accused of instructing their flocks how to vote. The Irish were charged with aspiring to rule America; and the "incendiary" *Pilot* was singled out as the worst culprit. On Sunday morning (November 10th) Boston was flooded with handbills issued by *The Atlas*, in which McGee's editorial about "cowards and sons of cowards" was reprinted with scathing comments. So great was the excitement that *The Pilot* had to invoke special police protection.²¹ Many Catholics feared that a riot was brewing

¹⁸ *Pilot*, Oct. 19, 1844.¹⁹ *Ibid.*, June 22, 1844.²⁰ *Atlas*, Oct. 23, 1844.²¹ T. D'A. McGee, *A History of the Irish Settlers in North America, from the Earliest Period to the Census of 1850* (Boston, 1852), p. 146.

that would threaten their churches, their homes, and their lives. Driven by that fear, J. R. Fitzgerald, of *The Reporter*, who had all along condemned McGee's course in "defaming" and "defying" the natives, toured the offices of the Whig papers that Sunday evening to urge that *The Pilot's* articles represented neither the Church nor the opinion of the majority of Irish Catholics, and to beg these papers to publish a statement from him to that effect. That statement, which appeared in *The Atlas* on the morning of the election, amid a flood of vitriolic attacks upon *The Pilot* and the Irish, may have helped somewhat to avert an outbreak. What helped even more, doubtless, was the fact that in Massachusetts, at least, the Whigs won a complete victory, and the dreaded "foreign vote" had evidently been divided between the two parties.

At any rate, the animosities and the anxieties that had been created did not quickly die down. For some weeks *The Pilot* and *The Reporter* engaged in furious combat, each accusing the other of betraying the Irish-American cause. The Catholic public was sharply divided. The Bishop's view is shown by the fact that he canceled his subscription to the "inflammatory" *Pilot*.²² Meanwhile, to disarm public hostility, on the Thursday evening after the election a great meeting of Irish-Americans was held in Marlboro Hall; McGee and Fitzgerald explained their respective positions; and a series of compromise resolutions was adopted. On the one hand, the meeting indignantly disclaimed 'any such sentiments as had been ascribed to the *Boston Pilot*'; denied that that paper was the organ of the Irish Catholics for either political or religious purposes; and reiterated the veneration of Irish-born citizens for the name and institutions of America. On the other hand, they repelled "the atrocious and unprincipled calumnies" that had been hurled against them, especially the charge of being guided in political matters and in voting by the authorities of their Church.²³

The ensuing months saw numerous changes in the Catholic journals of Boston. Fitzgerald, who had carried much too far

²² *Memoranda*, Nov. 22, 1844.

²³ *Boston Daily Bee*, Nov. 16, 1844.

his personal animus against McGee, was soon dismissed from *The Reporter* by Clinton, its proprietor. The latter, then, for unknown reasons, appears to have discontinued his paper early in 1845.²⁴ Fitzgerald thereupon started one of his own, the *Boston Tablet*, but this lasted only a few months.²⁵ McGee, who had moderated his tone decidedly and done much to rehabilitate his shaken reputation, presently accepted an invitation to enter the service of a Dublin newspaper. He left Boston in May, 1845, amid many expressions of regret from Catholics and, indeed, from Protestants also, for his talents and his lovable character were patent to all who knew him. Separated from this meteoric but somewhat erratic editor, *The Pilot* resumed its former placid tenor and prudent course, and forged steadily ahead towards the position of the most popular Catholic newspaper in the United States.

In 1844 the Catholic press had been augmented by *Brownson's Quarterly Review*, edited by the famous convert to whom reference will be made a little later.

Apart from periodicals, the Catholic literary output in New England during this period was rather meagre. Fathers Fitton, O'Callaghan, and Ivers published various controversial pamphlets against Protestants. Father Fitton also found time in his extraordinarily busy life to translate several devotional and catechetical works: Dr. O'Flaherty translated De Maistre's *Letters on the Spanish Inquisition*; and Father O'Callaghan poured forth a stream of books against what he considered the abuses of the money power. D'Arcy McGee published only one book during his first stay in Boston;²⁶ and if in Brownson American Catholic letters had at last obtained a writer of the first rank, his main work as a son of the Church was to be done after Bishop Fenwick's death.²⁷

²⁴ I know of no evidence that the *Boston Reporter and Catholic Diary* (as it began to call itself in Oct., 1844) was in existence after March, 1845.

²⁵ No issues of this ephemeral journal seem to be preserved anywhere today. Allusions in other newspapers show that it was published at least from April to September, 1845, but by the end of that year Fitzgerald, like Clinton, appears to have left Boston.

²⁶ *Daniel O'Connell and His Friends* (Boston, 1845).

²⁷ The outstanding work on the subject of American Catholic newspapers and magazines down to 1840 is Rev. Paul J. Foik, C.S.C., *Pioneer Catholic Journalism* (U.S. Cath. Hist. Soc. Monograph Series, XI: New York, 1930).

II

In other fields of effort a respectable number of Catholic laymen achieved positions of distinction. Andrew Carney may be taken as an example from the realm of business, George Healy from the world of art.

Andrew Carney was born at Ballanagh, County Cavan, May 12, 1794, and came to Boston in 1816, an almost penniless immigrant. It was only by dint of many years of hard labor and saving that he was able to establish himself in business as a tailor. Then, around the middle of the 1830's, he was one of the first in this vicinity to engage in the manufacture of men's ready-made clothing; and thanks to the immense market thus tapped and to his success in obtaining a contract from the United States Government to supply uniforms for the army, within a decade he had laid the foundations of a fortune. In 1845 he retired from this business to devote the last nineteen years of his life to managing his investments and to philanthropy. Whatever he touched — real estate, insurance, banking, or industrial securities — seemed to turn to gold. He became one of the richest citizens of Boston, and the wealthiest Catholic in New England. But he was much more than a shrewd and successful merchant: he was also a high-minded, warm-hearted, open-handed gentleman; the soul of honor, integrity, and piety; the devoted friend and zealous helper of both Bishops Fenwick and Fitzpatrick; so generous towards the Church, the orphans, the sick, the poor, that he deserves to rank as the foremost Catholic philanthropist of New England during the nineteenth century. The story of his great benefactions, however, belongs to the history of the next episcopate.²⁸

George Peter Alexander Healy was born in Boston July 15,

²⁸ Cf. Rev. Gerald C. Treacy, S.J., "Andrew Carney, Philanthropist," *U.S. Cath. Hist. Soc., Records and Studies*, XIII (1919), 101-05. It is regrettable that, except for this brief article, the career of Andrew Carney, which amply deserves to be made the subject of a monograph, has scarcely been written up at all. I have had the privilege of using what remains of the private papers of Andrew Carney, most generously placed at my disposal by his great-granddaughter, Miss Louise Reggio.

1813, the son of an Irish sea-captain. Sorely handicapped at first by poverty, the boy, who early developed a passion for painting, was enabled by friends to open a studio in Federal Street in 1831, and three years later to go abroad to study. While henceforth leading a roving life, almost equally divided between America and Europe, he became perhaps one of the greatest, certainly one of the most sought after, portrait painters of the nineteenth century. Pius IX, Louis Philippe, Guizot, Thiers, Gambetta, Bismarck, Andrew Jackson, Henry Clay, John Quincy Adams, Webster, Lincoln, Grant, Sherman, Audubon, Prescott, Hawthorne, Longfellow were but some of the innumerable celebrities who sat for him. Two of his great historical canvases are familiar to most Americans: his "Webster Replying to Hayne," which hangs in Faneuil Hall, and his "Franklin Urging the Claims of the American Colonies upon Louis XVI." The son of a Catholic father and a Protestant mother, Healy was baptized as an infant by Father Matignon, but grew up rather indifferent in matters of religion. In middle life, however, under the influence of Bishop Fitzpatrick, he turned to an ardent and mystical Catholic faith. Henceforth his busy day regularly began with attendance at Mass at 5:30 A.M., and as an octogenarian he almost perished while struggling to church early one morning through a fearful snow-storm.²⁹ His last years were spent in Chicago, where he died in 1894.

Few things afford a better insight into the life of the Catholic laity during the Fenwick era than the number and character of the societies that sprang up to further all manner of good works.

Purely religious or devotional societies were, indeed, not nearly so numerous as in later times, though some existed, such as the men's and women's Confraternities of the Holy Cross at the Cathedral. Perhaps they were not so much needed by that generation of Catholics, who were accustomed on Sundays to attend with almost equal fidelity both Mass and Vespers and to hear a good, long sermon at both services.

²⁹ *Life of George P. A. Healy, by his Daughter Mary* (Madame Charles Bigot) (Chicago, 19—), pp. 47 f.

But with a Catholic population mainly made up of recent and, in large part, very poor immigrants, charitable organizations multiplied abundantly. Among those of more general scope, alongside the historic Charitable Irish Society of Boston there arose the Lowell Irish Benevolent Society (1833), the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society of Augusta (1838), and the Hibernian Benevolent Societies of Portland and New Haven.

Among more specialized objects of benevolence, the children naturally attracted particular attention. In 1829 Bishop Fenwick started in Boston the "Ladies' Charitable Society for Clothing Poor Children," a society which, under some changes of name, continued for many years to provide for indigent girls. For the benefit of boys a very notable organization grew up under the name of the "Young Catholic's Friend Society." It was launched on April 4, 1835, at a meeting of eight young men, most of whom were then and later so prominent in Catholic lay activities in Boston that their names deserve to be recorded. They were: Patrick A. O'Neil, Owen O'Brien, Dennis P. Byrne, Edwin A. Palmer, William Galligan, Patrick Donahoe, James B. Clinton, and William Daly.

With the cordial approval of Bishop Fenwick, this new society soon gained a large membership and developed a most creditable and beneficent activity. Its members at first devoted themselves chiefly to supplying poor boys with clothing, hats, shoes, and other necessities; bringing them to Sunday school; and finding homes for them, when necessary. For this purpose they made regular house-to-house visits. In 1836, however, the Cathedral Sunday school being sorely in need of teachers, the Society also took over the whole duty of teaching and managing the boys' department of that school, which it conducted for many years with great success. To provide funds for these activities, it levied monthly assessments on its members and occasionally solicited contributions from the public. As these resources were insufficient, from 1836 onward it organized annual courses of public lectures, which, attracting as they did many of the most talented public speakers of the day, both Catholic and non-Catholic, were for nearly a quarter of a cen-

tury important events in the intellectual life of Catholic Boston. By 1841 the President of the society could declare not unjustly: "No other Catholic institution in the United States, formed for similar purposes, has attained the same degree of distinction and approbation."³⁰ Societies bearing the same name and modeled upon the Boston organization were by that time appearing in Roxbury, Lowell, Salem, New Haven, Baltimore, St. Louis, and even in Athlone, Ireland.

An offshoot of this admirable association was the "St. Vincent de Paul Society," founded in 1838 by Owen O'Brien and others. Contrary to a surmise that has sometimes been put forward, this early St. Vincent de Paul Society had nothing whatever to do with the great society of the same name which is doing such magnificent work in the Archdiocese today. It was simply an association of men and women who banded together to raise funds to help the Sisters of Charity in maintaining their school and later their orphan asylum.³¹ This good work it continued throughout Bishop Fenwick's lifetime. Various other organizations for the help of Catholic orphans arose elsewhere, notably at Providence, where the "Hibernian Orphans' Society," founded in 1839, began a campaign which ended in 1861 with the establishment of the present St. Aloysius' Orphan Asylum.

Very popular at that time were societies which, from dues collected and other funds raised, were pledged to help their members in case of sickness or other misfortunes. Examples of such organizations were the Boston Roman Catholic Mutual Relief Society, founded in 1832 and incorporated by the General Court in 1843; the Mutual Relief Society of St. Mary's, Charlestown (1834; incorporated in 1844); the St. John's Mutual Relief Society, of East Cambridge (1842); and the St. Mary's Charitable Mutual Relief Society, of Boston (1842).

Among associations devoted more to social improvement than to charity, the first place undoubtedly belonged to the tem-

³⁰ Semi-annual report of April, 1841. Cf. *The Pilot*, Dec. 17, 1842. The records of the Young Catholic's Friend Society for 1835-1842 are in the possession of the Charitable Irish Society of Boston, and form a precious source for the history of laymen's benevolent activities at that time.

³¹ *Pilot*, April 28, July 14, 21, 28, Dec. 29, 1838, May 4, 1839, Jan. 4, 1840, etc.

perance societies. Throughout the thirties the temperance movement among Protestant Americans had been making great progress, and by the early forties it had attained an almost furious crescendo. "There is nothing so fashionable in New York as Temperance," wrote a journal of the time; "The various houses and halls where its wholesome doctrines are explained and enforced are crowded every evening. The reformed drunkards are the most popular orators of the day."³² Among Catholics in this region, the movement made little progress until after Father Theobald Mathew, O.M. Cap., had begun at Cork on April 10, 1838, the famous crusade for total abstinence which in the next four years swept through almost every parish in Ireland. The effect of his appeal was immensely enhanced by the idea that the moral renovation which he was producing was the necessary prelude to and the guarantee of Irish victory in the struggle for Repeal. "The success of his cause," said an orator at a Charitable Irish banquet in Boston, "insures the independence and regeneration of Ireland."³³ Hence Catholic New England took up the temperance movement for reasons of Irish patriotism as well as for moral reasons.

The beginning was made hereabouts at a meeting at the Cathedral for the purpose of forming a Catholic temperance association. Bishop Fenwick attended, and gave "a glowing and eloquent description of the happy effects of Temperance in Ireland, through the instrumentality of Father Mathew, urging in the most emphatic manner the immediate formation of similar societies here, and assured them that he would give it his most cordial support."³⁴ The movement spread like wildfire. Nearly all the priests of the Diocese took it up vigorously, Fathers McDermott, Corry, O'Flaherty, Fitzsimmons, and Fitton standing forth particularly as leaders. For a couple of years *The Pilot* was filled with glowing reports of the triumphs of the temperance cause. At St. Mary's, Boston, twelve hundred people had taken the pledge on one Sunday. Nearly all the Catholics of Worcester had taken it. "Lowell has been morally revolu-

³² *Salem Gazette*, Jan. 21, 1842.

³³ *Pilot*, March 20, 1841.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, April 4, 1840.

tionized," it was stated, "since the Temperance agitation in that city; and the almost entire Irish population . . . have become tee-totalers." ³⁵ Numerous Catholic temperance and total abstinence societies arose, many of them having also a benevolent character (the mutual relief principle). For some years no St. Patrick's Day or Fourth of July celebration was complete without a vast parade of these organizations. By 1845 a Protestant writer reported that there were in Boston almost fifteen thousand Catholic total abstainers, and he added: "It is but justice to say that none, who sign the pledge, regard it more sacredly, or keep it more faithfully." ³⁶

Almost for the first time Catholics and Protestants appeared to have found one moral crusade on which they could combine, and there was a brief period of what might almost be called fraternization. Even the Evangelical journals that were usually most scorching about "Popery" began to praise the beneficent work of the Catholic clergy. ³⁷ Catholic priests were frequently invited to lecture on temperance and to administer the pledge in Protestant churches. Catholic and Protestant societies paraded together on public holidays, as at Boston on July 4, 1841, when, out of five thousand temperance marchers, it was estimated that two thirds were Catholic Irishmen. ³⁸ Occasionally there were joint meetings.

The continuous excitement and agitation over the temperance question that marked the years 1840-1842 were too great to last. The movement was weakened by the division between the champions of mere temperance and those of total abstinence, and also by resentment against the growing tendency of non-Catholic organizations to enforce moral reform by legislation. In the later forties, this first Catholic temperance crusade died away here, just as, in general, the temperance movement did pretty much all over the world.

In a New England environment societies for intellectual

³⁵ *Ibid.*, Feb. 28, 1841, Aug. 1, 1840, July 17, 1841.

³⁶ Lemuel Shattuck, *Report to the Committee of the City Council Appointed to Obtain the Census of Boston for the Year 1845* (*ibid.*, 1846), p. 126.

³⁷ E.g., *Zion's Herald*, July 22, 1840; *Boston Recorder*, Dec. 2, 1842.

³⁸ *Pilot*, July 10, 1841.

improvement could not be lacking. Examples of such were the Hibernian Lyceum (*fl.ca.* 1833-1835), and the Hibernian Total Abstinence Lyceum (1846), of Boston, and the Hibernian Institute (1843), of Hartford — all of them Catholic young men's societies, which had libraries and weekly meetings devoted to debates, discussions, and lectures. St. Mary's Reading and Library Association, of Boston, in 1845 maintained a circulating library of four hundred books and a night school for adults. Various musical organizations existed, notably the Gregorian Society, founded in 1836, which for many years brought together the various Catholic choirs of Boston to perfect themselves in the rendering of Church music, and which occasionally gave much-admired public concerts.

Last but by no means least were the associations formed to help the cause of Ireland. During the crisis of the fight for Catholic Emancipation, "Hibernian Relief Societies" sprang up in Boston (1826) and Providence (1827) to raise funds to be sent to Dublin. After Daniel O'Connell's great triumph, on July 6, 1829, the Boston Society held a victory celebration and dissolved. Two years later, however, after the Liberator had begun his campaign for the repeal of the Union, the organization was revived as the "Society of the Friends of Ireland." It remained active down to about 1835, when O'Connell himself decided to "give the Whigs a chance" to show what they would do for his country. After the failure of that experiment, in 1840 he launched his second and supreme struggle for Repeal, which for the next few years held Irishmen all over the world tense with excitement and fervid sympathy. Celtic New England did its share with vim and vigor. The Irish-Americans of Boston started a "Repeal Society" so promptly that they henceforth claimed that their city was the cradle and chief centre of the Repeal movement in America. Similar associations sprang up in Lowell, Providence, Worcester, Fall River, and, ultimately, in every town where any appreciable number of Irishmen could be assembled. These societies held at least monthly meetings, collected monthly dues to be transmitted to Ireland, and followed with bated breath every event across the

water. Apart from them, contributions for the Irish cause flowed in from almost every village and hamlet in New England, the Catholic clergy commonly heading the list of donors. Never had Irish hopes been higher nor Ireland's prospects brighter than during the years between 1840 and 1843; but never have those hopes been more cruelly blighted than they were to be by the events of the five ensuing years — the failure and death of the Liberator, the nightmare of the Famine, the abortive uprising of 1848, the collapse for the time being of the whole national movement.

In the political life of this country — in New England at least — Catholics as yet played only the humblest rôle.

Religious liberty and the equality of all denominations before the law were, indeed, almost everywhere established in theory. Massachusetts in 1833 completed the separation of Church and State — a change which Catholics favored but which they seem to have done nothing to bring about. Only New Hampshire — the stronghold of the Democratic Party! — continued to set a shining example of intolerance by pertinaciously insisting on excluding Catholics from the higher state offices and on authorizing her towns to levy taxes for the support of the Protestant religion.

In practice religious equality was still far from perfect. In the public institutions of Massachusetts, for instance, whether state, county, or municipal, Catholic priests were apparently allowed entrance only on rare occasions, and probably by special permission in each case. Most of these institutions, on the other hand, were constantly attended by Protestant clergymen, whether as appointed chaplains or as volunteers. In the Charlestown State's Prison the inmates were obliged to attend Protestant religious services twice daily, and they were virtually compelled to attend Protestant Sunday school and to submit to all manner of religious ministrations from a Protestant chaplain.³⁹ In 1843 this gentleman caused something of an outcry in the Legislature when he was forced to confess that he had been

³⁹ *Rules and Regulations of the State Prison*, 1829 (House Doc. 10, p. 903, Mass. State Archives).

accustomed to forbid the prisoners to receive any religious books which he regarded as "exerting a direct influence to mislead the mind and to put at hazard the salvation of the soul," and that in this category he placed all Catholic, Unitarian, and Universalist works, including even the Douay Bible.⁴⁰ Very similar conditions existed in the Houses of Industry, Reformation, and Correction in South Boston,⁴¹ and, apparently, in many other institutions — conditions which contrasted grimly with the constitutional guarantees of religious liberty and equality.

Now that something approaching universal manhood suffrage was everywhere established, Catholics might vote, but they had very little chance of ever being elected to public office. Religious and racial prejudice was far too strong. The Democrats, indeed, as the party which professed to champion the rights of foreign-born citizens, did occasionally put an Irish Catholic name on their ticket; but enough Democratic voters could usually be relied upon to scratch such a name from their ballots to render the gesture quite innocuous. In fact, most of the very few Catholics that are known to have been elected to any public office at this time,⁴² seem to have been Whigs.

The only New England Catholic who attained high position in political life was Edward Kavanagh, of Maine, whose early career was traced in the first volume of this work. His years of schooling and foreign travel at an end, the younger Kavanagh, as has been seen, had settled down in his native town of Newcastle about 1816 to take up the study and practice of law. That profession proved only a gateway to politics and diplomacy, which he found far more interesting. The scion of a well-to-do and respected family; educated, cultivated, and traveled far beyond most Maine politicians of the time; handsome, dig-

⁴⁰ *Senate Doc.* 11, p. 455 (*Mass. State Archives*); *Records of the Executive Council*, 1843-1844.

⁴¹ Cf. the annual reports on these institutions, 1839-1846, in the Boston City Archives, and the interesting correspondence about them published by *The Young Catholic's Friend*, Sept. 30, 1840.

⁴² E.g., Dr. Henry B. C. Greene, the first Catholic to sit in the Massachusetts House of Representatives (1841-1843); and Hugh Cummiskey and Charles Short, chosen to the Lowell City Council in 1843 and 1845 respectively.

nified, affable, tactful, intelligent, and high-minded; staunchly attached to the Democratic Party, then normally dominant in the State, he was admirably fitted for a political career, in spite of the fact that he was known to be an ardent Catholic. After some apprenticeship in local office, he made his *début* on a broader stage as a member of the Maine House of Representatives in 1826, as a State Senator in 1828, and as secretary of the upper House in 1830. The following year he was elected to Congress, in which he sat for two terms (1831-1835). Defeated for reëlection, he was then rewarded by the Administration for his stalwart service to the Jacksonian cause by receiving a diplomatic post, as he had always desired. He was sent as *Chargé d'Affaires* to Lisbon to restore diplomatic relations with Portugal. In this delicate and difficult position, in a country constantly racked by revolution and usually quite under the control of Great Britain, he acquitted himself with great credit. His two outstanding achievements were his success in obtaining both the payment of certain long-standing American claims for damages and the first commercial treaty that Portugal had ever concluded with the United States (signed August 26, 1840). After six years of strenuous labors, which undermined his health, although they won him the warm thanks of the now Whig Administration, he resigned in 1841 and returned home.

Almost immediately the weary warrior was elected to the State Senate for 1842, and chosen president of that body. In this capacity he had the opportunity to render his greatest single public service. The long-pending controversy over the northeast boundary was approaching a crisis with the sending of Lord Ashburton as special British plenipotentiary to attempt a settlement. Over that question public opinion in Maine was feverishly wrought up, the common view being that not an inch ought to be ceded of what was thought clearly to belong to the State under the Treaty of 1783. If no agreement was reached, war might result. With this question Kavanagh, who as a commissioner of the State had toured and studied the disputed territory, was especially familiar. For that reason, doubtless, he was elected one of the four commissioners who were to

represent Maine in the negotiations at Washington, it being recognized by the Federal Government that no settlement could be made without the consent of the State chiefly concerned. In the stormy discussions that followed (June-August, 1842), we have no means of knowing precisely what Kavanagh's views were or just what went on within the ranks of the Maine delegation. But it seems probable that it was he — the best diplomat and the best writer of state papers among the four — who guided the fight for Maine's claims as long as that could safely be kept up, and then, despite intense die-hard sentiment at home, agreed to the not inequitable compromise which the rest of the country and, above all, the Administration ardently desired. This compromise was embodied in the famous Webster-Ashburton Treaty of August 9, 1842, which settled an ancient and vexatious problem and averted the danger of war with Great Britain.

The following year Governor Fairfield resigned in order to go to the United States Senate, and Kavanagh, as president of the State Senate, automatically succeeded him in the gubernatorial chair (March 7 to December 31, 1843). Here, too, he showed the energy, the wisdom, the high fidelity to duty and to principle that had marked his whole public career. Doubtless he desired a second term as Governor, but, once the Democratic State Convention, for reasons that reflect no discredit on him, had nominated another, he supported his party's decision even though his personal friends and especially his coreligionists protested and insisted on giving three thousand votes for him at the ensuing election. Retiring to private life at the beginning of 1844, he died only three weeks later (January 21st), amid tokens of universal respect and regret.

Although not gifted as an orator and somewhat lacking in that urge to push oneself forward which a political career usually requires, Edward Kavanagh was in all other respects a great man. An exemplary Catholic, a close friend and valued helper of Bishop Fenwick, as his father had been of Father Matignon and Bishop Cheverus, a devoted and most meritorious servant of his Church, his community, his party, his com-

monwealth, and his country, he left behind him "a reputation without a stain, a memory without a blot."⁴³ Unsullied purity and loftiness of character were his outstanding attributes, and he deserves to rank as not only the first, but as one of the ablest and noblest, among the Catholic statesmen of New England.⁴⁴

III

Although there was nothing that could even faintly suggest a mass movement towards the ancient Church, the Fenwick era saw a steady and not unimpressive stream of conversions to Catholicism from among those of native stock. This fact is the more remarkable in that nearly all the characteristic intellectual currents of the time might seem to have been heading in an opposite direction. On the one hand, the Evangelical movement was reviving orthodox Protestantism and all the sixteenth-century prejudices against Rome. On the other hand, Unitarianism, Transcendentalism, and the literary, philosophical, and social movements centring at Boston, Cambridge, Concord, and Brook Farm appeared to be driving more sophisticated minds farther and farther away from Catholicism, into an undogmatic and tenuous natural religion or towards individual culture, or humanitarianism, or social reform as substitutes for religion. In reality, however, the intellectual climate of the age was by no means so unfavorable to Catholicism as it might at first sight appear. What would seem to Catholics to have been the exaggerations, the errors, or the insufficiencies of the movements just mentioned often produced a natural reaction and conversions to the ancient faith of Christendom. The Evangelicals by the very violence of their attack upon "Popery" both betrayed the insecurity of their own position and stirred up not a few inquiring souls to investigate both sides of the question and then to embrace the faith which they found to

⁴³ *Gardiner Independent*, Feb. 14, 1844.

⁴⁴ The best, though a not altogether accurate, account of his life is that by Msgr. Charles W. Collins, "Governor Edward Kavanagh," *U.S. Cath. Hist. Soc., Records and Studies*, V (1909), 244-273.

have been calumniated. The Unitarians did much to destroy traditional prejudices, while by the negative, speculative, and meagre character of what they themselves had to offer, they excited many minds to seek positive, integral, and divinely guaranteed Christianity in the Catholic Church. The great writers of that golden age of our literature in studying the culture of the Old World could not but encounter Catholicism at every step, and nearly all of them — notably Longfellow, Lowell, Hawthorne, and Whittier — displayed a deep sympathy and admiration for its outward beauty and inner strength.⁴⁵ The Oxford Movement was, by the 1840's, inciting not a few Americans to follow Newman and Ward upon the path to Rome.

While no complete statistics are available, it seems reasonable to estimate that during Bishop Fenwick's episcopate the Catholic population of New England was increased by at least two thousand converts.⁴⁶ They came from all denominations. They cropped up in all parts of New England. Indeed, in each section the beginning of organized Catholic activity was usually followed by a wave of conversions. Even where the Church had not yet penetrated, there were cases of people in isolated rural communities who simply read themselves into the Catholic Faith.

Among these converts the most diverse professions were represented. There were physicians, such as Dr. John S. Bartlett, of Marblehead, Dr. Samuel S. Butler, of East Berkshire, Vermont,⁴⁷ and Dr. Henry B. C. Greene, of Saco, Maine, and later of Boston, who showed himself during his brief life a model of every Christian virtue and a leader in every Catholic good work.⁴⁸ There were ministers, such as the former Episcopalians, Rev. George F. Haskins, who has already been mentioned, and Rev. William H. Hoyt, of St. Albans, Vermont, of whom more

⁴⁵ Cf. the excellent article by George Parsons Lathrop, "Catholic Tendency in American Literature," *Am. Cath. Quart. Rev.*, XVIII (1893), 372-391.

⁴⁶ At the Cathedral the annual number of converts received usually ran from thirty to sixty, and sometimes even higher.

⁴⁷ Received into the Church in 1837.

⁴⁸ Dr. Greene was received into the Church during Father Taylor's administration, but his manifold and fruitful labors for the Faith fell chiefly within the Fenwick period. He died Jan. 31, 1848.

will be said later; or Rev. Augustine F. Hewit, the son of a Congregational clergyman of New Haven, Connecticut, who, after being first a Congregational and then an Episcopal minister, entered the Catholic Church in 1846 and was later to be one of the most illustrious figures among the Paulist Fathers. Diplomacy was represented by Peter A. Kielchen, the Russian Consul in Boston. Received into the Church about 1834, along with his wife and children, this excellent man served for years as superintendent of the Cathedral Sunday school, and in many ways held a position in Catholic Boston of Bishop Fenwick's time almost comparable to that of the Spanish Consul, Don Juan Stoughton, in the time of Bishop Cheverus. A convert artist was David Claypoole Johnston, of Boston. Painter, etcher, engraver, lithographer, this "American Cruikshank" long held a preëminent position in this country as a book illustrator and caricaturist.⁴⁹ The business world supplied sterling converts in George F. Emery and George W. Lloyd, of Boston, Captain Thomas Moriarty, of Salem, Daniel H. Southwick, of Cambridge, Isaac B. Lovejoy, of Lowell, Jonathan Tucker, Jr., of Saco, Maine, Francis B. Blake and Harvey Pierce, of Worcester, the Taylors, of Hartford, and many more that might be named. An example of converts from rural communities was Theodore Goffe, a farmer of Bedford, New Hampshire, who in 1797 had entertained Bishop Cheverus at his home, but had had no further contacts with any Catholic priest until in 1831 he came to Boston to beg that, on the basis of his reading, he might be admitted into the Church.⁵⁰ Mention should also be made of a printer in Portland, Maine, named Joshua Moody Young. The son of a Harvard graduate and on his mother's side descended from a famous line of Puritan divines (the

⁴⁹ Born in Philadelphia in 1799, Johnston settled in Boston in 1825; he was received into the Church, Nov. 2, 1844, by Bishop Fitzpatrick, and died in Dorchester in 1865. While it has been stated by some writers that Washington Allston, the painter, and Horatio Greenough, the sculptor, were also converted to Catholicism, I know of no proof for this assertion and much evidence that would point against it.

⁵⁰ *Memoranda*, Nov. 20, 1831. Theodore Goffe (1769-1860), although a plain farmer, came of a locally prominent family, and is described as a man of intelligence, high moral character, and great sincerity of purpose.

Moody's), this deeply religious youth was received into the Church by Father Ffrench in 1828. After converting his three brothers (one of whom, Edmund, was to become a Jesuit) and five of his sisters, he went out to the Middle West, where he became a devoted and most effective missionary priest in Ohio and then the second and a truly great Bishop of Erie (1854-1866).⁵¹

While converts were drawn, of course, from all classes of society, it is interesting to note how many of them came from the highest social strata. As examples one may take Joseph Coolidge Shaw and Edward Holker Welch, both of them scions of families that were among the wealthiest and most prominent in Boston, both of them graduates of Harvard in the class of 1840, and intimate friends. The former, after finishing college, spent some years in travel abroad, in the course of which, thanks in part to the influence of an already half-converted Anglican, later to be the famous Father Faber, he was received into the Church at Rome in 1843. Returned to Cambridge to take up the study of law, he soon found the desire for a religious vocation overmastering him, and, with the consent of his family and the joyful approval of Bishop Fenwick, he went back to Rome to begin his studies for the priesthood. After being ordained by Bishop Fitzpatrick in 1847 and serving for a short time among the diocesan clergy, he entered the Jesuit novitiate at Frederick, Maryland, where within a few months (on March 10, 1851) a sudden attack of pneumonia cut short a career that had seemed full of brilliant promise. Edward H. Welch, while a student at the Harvard Law School, became a Catholic late in 1844, presumably under the combined influence of Shaw and Father Haskins. Two years later he departed for Saint-Sulpice to begin his ecclesiastical studies. More fortunate than his classmate, he was to round out nearly half a century of fruitful service in the priesthood and in the Jesuit Order — service in which he was so successful in making converts that he was nicknamed "the receiver general."⁵²

⁵¹ The best account of his life is still that of Richard H. Clarke, *Lives of the Deceased Bishops of the Catholic Church in the United States*, II (New York, 1872), 514-528.

⁵² *Woodstock Letters*, XXXVI (1907), 132 f.

Among feminine converts of high social standing there was, for instance, Mrs. Charles Lyman (Susan Warren), who was received into the Church by Bishop Fenwick February 19, 1839: the daughter of Dr. John Collins Warren, the foremost American surgeon of that time; the sister-in-law of Mayor Theodore Lyman of Boston; the mother of Miss Florence Lyman, so prominent in Catholic circles in the later nineteenth century; and the aunt of the celebrated Catholic scientist, Dr. Thomas Dwight.⁵³ There was Mary Gardiner Greene, whose father, Nathaniel Greene, was Postmaster of Boston almost throughout the Fenwick period and a prominent political leader, editor, and author. After her conversion in 1842, Mary Gardiner Greene became a Sister of Charity at Emmitsburg, and died in 1852 at Panama when going with a group of nuns to found a house of their congregation in California. The Misses Rosamond and Ann Vincent Everett, nieces of Governor Edward Everett, also joined the Sisters of Charity, and both of them, in a half-century of convent life, again demonstrated what splendid Catholics could be formed from the Puritan stock.⁵⁴ Rather similar was the story of the three Misses Pearce. On the day when Julia Pearce was received into the Church (September 19, 1842), aching to share her joy with someone but scarcely knowing a single Catholic, she hunted up a good old Irish washerwoman and, throwing her arms around her, danced about crying, "*We are Catholics.*"⁵⁵ Not long afterwards, however, she had the happiness of seeing her sister Frances and her

⁵³ Mrs. Lyman, born July 23, 1806, married Charles Lyman April 4, 1827, and died July 4, 1856. Her sister, Mrs. Thomas Dwight, Sr., became a Catholic in 1856.

⁵⁴ They were daughters of Oliver Everett, eldest brother of Edward Everett. Rosamond Everett (Sister Rose Genevieve), born March 14, 1819, was received into the Catholic Church Sept. 9, 1841, and after joining Mother Seton's daughters in 1843 was long stationed in Texas, where she was superior of the convent at Jefferson and founded the convent at Dallas. She died at Emmitsburg Feb. 21, 1893. Ann Everett, born Aug. 9, 1821, followed her sister into the Church April 10, 1843, and then into the religious life. As Sister Frances Liguori, she passed away at Emmitsburg Feb. 22, 1895. Cf. Edward F. Everett, *Descendants of Richard Everett, of Dedham, Massachusetts* (Boston, 1902), p. 120.

⁵⁵ George Parsons Lathrop and Rose Hawthorne Lathrop, *A Story of Courage; Annals of the Georgetown Convent of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary* (Cambridge, 1895), p. 338.

cousin Georgiana follow her example. All three soon betook themselves to Georgetown to become Visitation nuns. Julia Pearce (Sister Eulalia), a woman of rare intellectual gifts and personal charm, spent most of her useful and inspiring life at the convent in Wheeling, where she died May 5, 1891. Frances Pearce (Sister Mary Teresa) was one of the founders and a lifelong member of the convent at Frederick.⁵⁶ On February 11, 1846, Bishop Fitzpatrick received into the Church two more ladies of distinguished lineage, both converts from High Anglicanism: Miss Julia Metcalf and Miss Ruth Charlotte Dana. The former, a daughter of Judge Theron Metcalf, of the Supreme Judicial Court, was the first to become a Catholic in a family which was to give the Church some notable recruits — a Rome-ward movement which the Judge encouraged but did not join. The second of these converts was the daughter of Richard Henry Dana I, the poet, and the sister of Richard Henry Dana II, the lawyer and author of *Two Years Before the Mast*. "Little short of a genius" herself, as her nephew attested, "with an unusual knowledge of philosophy, music, and modern languages," although in respect to religion almost isolated in the world in which she moved, Miss Charlotte Dana remained until her death in 1901 a firm adherent of the Church which she liked to say she had entered before Newman made it popular.⁵⁷

If these last two cases, like those of Messrs. Hewit and Hoyt and numerous others, attest the influence of the Oxford Movement in stimulating conversions, at the opposite pole of New England thought, among the Transcendentalists and Fourierists of Brook Farm, there also appeared Catholicizing tendencies. Among the members of that famous colony, who shortly

⁵⁶ She died there Oct. 15, 1881. Georgiana Pearce (Sister Mary Michael) was sent to the Philadelphia convent in 1848, and after its closing three years later I have been unable to trace her history. In treating of the nuns mentioned above I have been helped by data most kindly supplied by Sister Paula Dunn, Superior of St. Joseph's College, Emmitsburg, Sister Jane Frances Leibell, Superior of the Georgetown Visitation Convent, Sister Mary Joseph O'Neill, Superior of the Monastery of the Visitation, Frederick, and Sister M. Marguerite Corrigan, Secretary of the Visitation Monastery, Wheeling.

⁵⁷ Bliss Perry, *Richard Henry Dana, 1851-1931* (Boston, 1921), pp. 10, 24, 28, 209; Georgina Pell Curtis, *Some Roads to Rome in America* (2nd ed.: St. Louis, 1910), p. 382.

after leaving it sought admission to the Church, were: Isaac Hecker, a New Yorker, famous as the founder of the Missionary Society of St. Paul the Apostle; Mrs. George Ripley (Sophia Willard Dana), a noble, gifted, and charming woman, who deserved almost equally with her husband the title of founder and mainstay of Brook Farm; her niece, Sarah F. Stearns, who is said to have become a nun; Rev. George C. Leach, Rev. William J. Davis, and Bulkeley A. Hastings. It is said that George Ripley himself many years later was disappointed in his desire to become a Catholic on his deathbed only by the accident that prevented Father Hecker from reaching him in time.⁵⁸

IV

It remains to speak of by far the greatest convert of the period, one who held such a position in the intellectual life of the country both before and after his reception into the Church that he has sometimes been called the American Newman.

Orestes Augustus Brownson was born September 16, 1803, at Stockbridge, Vermont, of an old Connecticut family in rather straitened circumstances. Most of his boyhood was passed on a farm with a couple of charitable neighbors, plain, honest, elderly people, who could give him no schooling, but did teach him strict ideas about morality, especially the virtue of truthfulness, and the elements of old-fashioned Congregational religion. Deprived of companions of his own age and of all games and sports, he grew up a serious, prematurely aged boy. Reading on grave subjects, chiefly religion, was his great delight. A book was in his hand at every leisure moment, and through the long winter evenings, lying beside the fireplace, by the light of the pine knots he had gathered during the day, he pored over the volumes which he borrowed from all over the village. From early childhood religion seemed to him the most im-

⁵⁸ Rev. Walter Elliott, C.S.P., *The Life of Father Hecker* (New York, 1891), p. 91. On Catholicism at Brook Farm, cf. Georgiana Bruce Kirby, *Years of Experience: Historic and Personal Memoirs* (New York, 1894), pp. 167 f., 246, 270; Lindsay Swift, *Brook Farm* (New York, 1904), pp. 115 f.; Katherine Burton, *Paradise Planters: the Story of Brook Farm* (London and New York, 1939), *passim*.

portant of all matters, and his desire was to become a minister.

In 1817 the widowed Mrs. Brownson removed with her children to Ballston Spa, Saratoga County, New York. Here there was an academy which Orestes attended for a while — his only formal education — until his savings ran out and he had to go to work, first as a printer, later as a school-teacher. Here, too, the vicissitudes of his strange religious Aeneid began. The vaguely formulated but warmly cherished "orthodoxy" of his early years had been shaken by the confusion of jangling sects in his new home and by the well-meant efforts of an aunt who strove to win him for Universalism. Passionately eager for a full and positive faith and for a guide that could, with the voice of authority, dispel his doubts, on the spur of a sudden impulse he joined the Presbyterian Church (October 20, 1822).

It was, as he wrote later, the act of "an intellectual desperado." Very soon he discovered that there was much in Presbyterianism from which his reason recoiled, particularly the doctrine of unconditional election and reprobation, which seemed to him incompatible with God's justice and mercy. He was ready, indeed, to submit his reason to legitimate authority, but he found that the Presbyterian Church claimed no divine authority to teach. It merely referred him to the Bible and the right of private judgment, while threatening him with all manner of ecclesiastical penalties if by the use of his private judgment he arrived at any other conclusions than the Presbyterian Church did. This seemed thoroughly illogical. Perceiving that all the other Protestant denominations that prescribed creeds for their members were in the same untenable position, and regarding the Catholic Church as entirely out of the question, Brownson decided to fall back upon reason as the only practical guide and to go over to the creedless, so-called Liberal Christianity.

Choosing the only form of it with which he had yet had contacts, early in 1824 he announced himself a Universalist. After some further school-teaching, June 15, 1826, he was ordained a minister at Jaffrey, New Hampshire. For three years he officiated at various places, settling ultimately at Auburn,

New York, where he also became editor of a denominational paper, the *Gospel Advocate* — his first plunge into journalism, in which he was to be engaged, off and on, through most of the rest of his life. But Universalism, also, soon failed to satisfy him. It simply led to universal skepticism. Since its cardinal tenet, universal salvation, commended itself to his reason, but seemed flatly contradicted by the Scriptures when honestly interpreted, he felt that he could no longer believe in the inspiration of the Scriptures. Since everyone was to be saved, the Redemption became unnecessary, and Christ appeared to him a mere man. Driven forward by merciless logic from the premises he had now adopted, he came to renounce virtually every Christian doctrine, then even natural religion; he had nothing left in which he could trust except his five senses, and he could scarcely believe that he was more than a mere animal. "The most anti-Christian period of my life," he wrote later, "was the last two years that I was a Universalist minister,"⁵⁹ and it was with intense relief that, towards the close of 1829, he retired from that profession and from that denomination.

His fourth phase was, in his own phrase, that of "world reformer." Like many another New Englander, once he had lost his religion, he turned to social reform. He had long been deeply concerned over social inequalities, the power and tyranny of capitalism, the results of the new industrial system, the lot of the working classes. Now that he could no longer hope to lead men to heaven, his aim became — and remained down to about 1842 — to assure their well-being and happiness in this world and "so to organize society and government as to secure all men a paradise on earth."⁶⁰ For this purpose in 1829-1830 he allied himself with the radical activities of Fanny Wright and Robert Dale Owen and with the Workingmen's Party. Meantime, he was at the nadir of his religious life, in a

⁵⁹ *The Convert; or, Leaves from My Experience* (1857), in *The Works of Orestes A. Brownson, Collected and Arranged by Henry F. Brownson*, V (Detroit, 1884), 39. Throughout this account I have followed rather closely this spiritual autobiography of Brownson, which seems to me to an unusual degree frank and reliable.

⁶⁰ *The Convert*, p. 48.

state of agnosticism and agonizing doubt which he afterwards looked back upon "with startling horror" as an "eclipse of the soul" and a "midnight of reason."⁶¹

Two things chiefly helped him to begin the counter-movement, the rise from this Avernus. On the one hand, he found within himself, and he thought there existed in every man, an instinctive tendency to believe in the existence of God — a tendency which must carry conviction, whether it be taken as representing the "authority of the human race" or the still, small voice of God within the soul. On the other hand, he discovered that he could make no progress with the reorganization of society — still his chief concern — unless he could find a set of motives capable of overcoming human selfishness and weakness, and where could he find it except in religion? Hence, he returned to at least a hazy theism, and in February, 1831, resumed his old profession as the minister of an "undenominational" congregation at Ithaca, New York. Next, the study of Channing's sermons convinced him that his natural spiritual home was with the Unitarians, and in the summer of 1832 he was settled as the minister of that denomination at Walpole, New Hampshire.

The two years which Brownson spent in that village, and the two ensuing years at Canton, Massachusetts, were important in his development in many ways. Enjoying a comfortable income and much leisure, he could buy books freely and, for the first time, make a systematic study of philosophy and theology. After learning French and some German, he plunged deeply into the works of contemporary European writers, especially Benjamin Constant (from whom he adopted the idea that religions must embody themselves in institutions), Victor Cousin, then the foremost philosopher of France, and the Saint-Simonian school. He visited Boston frequently, became acquainted with all the leaders of Liberal thought, wrote much for the Unitarian journals, and built up his fame as a lecturer.

In 1836 he removed to Boston (residing in Chelsea) and

⁶¹ Henry F. Brownson, *Orestes A. Brownson's Early Life from 1803 to 1844* (Detroit, 1898), p. 60.

organized a new congregation, the "Society for Christian Union and Progress," before which he preached, in the Masonic Temple, for the next seven years. He was launching, so he thought, a great enterprise, "the Church of the Future," which would work towards a synthesis of all that was best in Catholicism and Protestantism, and would press with equal vigor for social reform. Only religion, he was convinced, could assure the victory of the people against their oppressors; and, conversely, religion could survive only if it allied itself with the people. To further this program he published in 1836 his *New Views of Christianity, Society, and the Church*, a book which he afterwards confessed was "remarkable for its acceptance and vindication in principle of nearly all the errors into which the human race has fallen."⁶² In 1838 he started the *Boston Quarterly Review*, a journal which soon attained national importance. Nearly all the intellectual élite of Boston and Concord contributed, but Brownson wrote most of the articles. By 1840 he held a commanding position. Everyone recognized his prodigious mental activity and vigor, his learning, his bristling independence, his talents as a thinker, orator, writer, critic, and publicist. Victor Cousin declared him the foremost American philosopher, Lord Brougham pronounced him our leading genius. He was often ranked with Channing and Emerson. In a community seething with intellectual movements and almost swarming with people who have taken a permanent place among the immortals of American thought and letters, he had quickly established himself as one of the *dii majores* of the New England Olympus.

But the year 1840 marked a turning-point. With his zeal for social reform further inflamed by what he had seen of the sufferings of the masses during the hard times since 1837, Brownson had thrown himself heart and soul into the campaign on the Democratic side, against the Whigs, the champions of aristocracy and privilege. In July he published in his *Review* his famous article on "The Laboring Classes." As an analysis of the workings of the new industrial system that essay was a masterpiece, unsurpassed by any writer of that generation. But

⁶² *The Convert*, pp. 83-84.

when it came to tracing a program of reforms, Brownson allowed his crusading fervor and his logic to run away with him. In order to make the democratic equality that Americans were always boasting of a reality, he proposed to extend it from the political to the economic sphere by abolishing banks, the big business corporations, the credit system, the inheritance of wealth, and even, save within narrow limits, private property. He had wanted to make a test case, to see how much democracy, as he understood it, the American public was prepared to accept, very much as Newman, with Tract 90 a few months later, wished to test how much infused Catholicism the Anglican Church was prepared to stand. For Brownson, as for Newman, the outcome of the experiment was instructive — and devastating. His article was received “with one universal scream of horror.”⁶³ Clearly, his ideas as to how to establish the kingdom of God on earth had little chance of being accepted by either the classes or the masses. To increase his discomfiture, the Whigs won the national election, and won it by cheap and hypocritical claptrap about the hero of Tippecanoe, log cabins, and hard cider that seemed to throw grave doubts on the intelligence of the electorate. Finally, the “Church of the Future” was evidently making very little progress.

Disillusioned and perplexed, Brownson began to revise his ideas. Hitherto he had believed in the power of truth to prevail by its own inherent force; he had had great faith in the wisdom and natural goodness of the masses; he had accepted Channing's doctrine of the substantial identity of the divine and the human, of God present in the soul of every man. Now he was forced to doubt these cheerful assumptions. It was not enough merely to exhort people to lead lives of love, generosity, and self-sacrifice, that they might show forth the spirit of Christ and bring in the kingdom of heaven on earth. How were selfish, frail, sinful, habit-bound human beings to get the *power* to do this? That question of power was fundamental.

At this point Brownson's thinking was “marvelously” assisted, indeed, as he admitted, “revolutionized,” by Pierre

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

Leroux, the French philosopher, whom he read in 1841. Leroux taught that man lives and grows only by "communion" — by contacts with and by assimilating something from that which is outside himself. He cannot even think without thinking what is not himself. His body would starve without food, and so would his mind and heart without fruitful contacts with nature and his fellow men. Similarly, his moral and spiritual nature would stagnate and make no progress unless brought into communion with a higher and nobler nature, God. Enthusiastically adopting this doctrine of "communion" as a general law of life, clarifying all manner of problems, Brownson developed it further, and the more easily because from Leroux he had also learned, for the first time, something of the Catholic teaching on Grace and the Sacraments. Hitherto he had held to the usual Liberal dogmas that God was not free to make a revelation, establish a supernatural dispensation, or intervene directly in the world He had made, for that would infringe upon the autonomy of human reason or upon the invariable workings of natural law. Now, however, it appeared evident that if God chose to do these things, He would be merely acting in accordance with a law of life that seemed to be everywhere manifested in man's affairs. Perhaps nature and supernature, reason and revelation, the laws of the material world and higher laws of the spiritual world, were not antinomies, but mutually supported and completed one another. All hopes for the moral and spiritual elevation of the race depended on whether God had chosen to impart to us supernatural truths and supernatural life; for, left to his own natural powers, man could never elevate himself above what he was, "raise himself by his waist band," become the likeness of the divine. History, Scripture, and philosophy then combined to convince Brownson that God had actually done these things. Thus the inhibitions that had long held him back from more than the vaguest religious belief were removed. "I shall never," he wrote, "forget the ecstasy of that moment when I first realized that God is free." ⁶⁴

Henceforth his thought raced forward like a torrent that has

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 140.

burst a dam. At bottom his cardinal idea, his "law of life," was very closely akin to the Catholic teaching on Grace; and it is instructive to note that, just as Luther, when he had rejected that teaching for the sake of Justification by Faith alone, was thereby forced to deny half the other doctrines of historic Christianity, so Brownson, once he had rediscovered Grace, found the other essential elements of Catholic theology reassembling themselves, falling together as if by magic, to form a compact and harmonious system. More and more clearly he saw that men could be raised to a higher, supernatural plane and made to share in the divine nature by "communion" with God through Jesus Christ, who, being both true God and true man, was the perfect and necessary Mediator. The divine life which He imparts is what the Catholic Church calls Grace. It must be transmitted to all ages through a regular and guaranteed channel, the Church. An institution vested with such a supreme mission must be authoritative and infallible, for it is "the highest manifestation of both the divine and the human, and therefore in both divine and human things the highest authority under God, nay . . . the authority of God Himself."⁶⁵ Protestantism, Brownson now recognized, was based on a false principle — that assumed right of the individual to set up his private judgment against the Church which is the voice of Christ. Protestantism was, moreover, "a schism, a separation from the source and current of the divine-human life which redeems and saves the world, and Protestants are, therefore, thrown back upon nature and able to live only the natural life of the race — saving the portion of Christian life they brought away with them at the time of the separation, and which, as not renewed from the source, must in time be exhausted."⁶⁶

Setting out upon this train of thought and research with no suspicion of where it would end, by 1843 Brownson was very near an overpowering but far from welcome conclusion. "I found myself," he wrote later, "with my starting point, led by an invincible logic to assert the Catholic Church as the true church or living body of Christ. To be logical, I saw I must

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 140.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

accept that church, and accept her as authoritative for natural reasons, and then take her own explanation of herself and her doctrines as true.”⁶⁷ Then, however, he hesitated, and for a year held back. He had the customary prejudices against “the present Catholic Church.” To join it meant, moreover, to break with the whole world in which he had lived, and a “leap in the dark”; and he feared unpleasant surprises. Was there no middle ground, no compromise position, no refuge, for instance, in Anglicanism as represented by the Oxford Movement? But he was too honest to consider such subterfuges very long, and he was, besides, concerned about his soul’s salvation. ‘As the Roman Catholic Church was clearly the Church of history, the only church which had the slightest claims to be regarded as the Body of Christ, it was to her he must go.’⁶⁸ On May 28, 1844, he called on Bishop Fenwick for a preliminary discussion. “I have made up my mind, and I shall enter the Church, if she will have me,” he wrote to his confidant, Isaac Hecker. “There is no use in resisting . . . I want you to come and see our good bishop. He is an excellent man — learned, polite, easy, affable, affectionate, and extremely warm-hearted . . . I like him very much.”⁶⁹ After two more conferences, the convert’s last objections vanished. Since Bishop Fenwick was leaving for a vacation in Maryland, Brownson was turned over to Bishop Fitzpatrick for a formal course of instruction. On October 20, 1844, at the Cathedral the latter received him into the Church — just about a year before Newman entered.

Though this outcome was not entirely unexpected to the public, immense must have been the sensation that a man universally recognized as one of the greatest, most independent, most audacious thinkers in America and one of the pillars of Liberal and Radical movements, should have made his submission to Rome. Nevertheless, the immediate results were less than might have been expected. Brownson’s conversion was almost the decisive factor in that of his young friend, Isaac Hecker; it probably influenced that of other members of the

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 164.

⁶⁹ Rev. Walter Elliott, *The Life of Father Hecker* (New York, 1891), p. 147.

Brook Farm group; and it may have hastened others among the numerous conversions of that period. But he had always been too self-sufficient, too rapid, and too deep a thinker to form a school of disciples, who might have followed him. His influence was weakened, moreover, by the fact that he had already made so many changes of religion. Scoffers styled him "Windmill" or "Weathervane Brownson," and predicted that, having been successively a Congregationalist, Presbyterian, Universalist, Agnostic, Unitarian, and Catholic, he would probably turn Mohammedan or Buddhist next week.

At all events, the pilgrim who had hitherto been always *en route* and who had wandered over so many lands and seas, was henceforth to remain, immovably fixed and supremely contented, in the haven he had now selected. Long afterwards, when he composed his spiritual autobiography, he affirmed, in words fit to confound all critics and which he continued to repeat till the end of his life:

In writing it, I have had occasion to review my whole past life, and to renew my thanks to Him who died that we might live, for having conducted me, after so many wanderings, from the abyss of doubt and infidelity to the light and truth of his Gospel, in the bosom of his Church, where I find the peace and repose so long denied me. . . .

I have, as a Catholic, felt and enjoyed a mental freedom which I never conceived possible while I was a non-Catholic. . . .

I can say truly that during the nearly thirteen years of Catholic experience I have found not the slightest reason to regret the step I took. I have had much to try me, and enough to shake me, if shaken I could be, but I have not had even the slightest temptation to doubt, or the slightest inclination to undo what I have done; and have every day found new and stronger reasons to thank Almighty God for his great mercy in bringing me to the knowledge of his church, and permitting me to enter and live in her communion. I know all that can be said in disparagement of Catholics. I am well versed, perhaps no man more so, in Catholic scandals, but I have not been deceived; I have found all that was promised me, all I

looked for. I have found the church all that her ministers represented her, all my imagination painted her, and infinitely more than I had conceived it possible for her to be. My experience as a Catholic, so far as the church, her doctrines, her morals, her discipline, her influences are concerned, has been a continued succession of agreeable surprises. . . .⁷⁰

Throughout the rest of his long life Brownson was the foremost lay apostle and the intellectual gladiator of the Catholic cause in this country. While he lectured a great deal, his service was rendered chiefly as a journalist. The *Boston Quarterly Review* having been discontinued in 1842, he resumed it at the beginning of 1844 under the name of *Brownson's Quarterly Review*. This he published in Boston until 1855, when he removed to New York, where his closest Catholic friends were;⁷¹ and there he continued it until January, 1865, and again in 1873-1875. While the *Review* discussed every serious question that occupied the public mind in that age, it gave primary and sometimes very preponderant attention to religion. Its tone varied somewhat at different periods, now more militant, now more irenic; but, in general, it may be said that Catholic principles have never been laid before American readers in more able, incisive, fearless, and brilliant fashion than in the pages of *Brownson's Review*. The bishops gathered at the Provincial Council of Baltimore in 1849 and Pope Pius IX in 1854 sent letters of approbation and encouragement to the intrepid defender of the Faith. It is true that Brownson's Catholic life, like Newman's, had its controversies, misunderstandings, and trials. He spoke his mind on all subjects quite too frankly and vigorously to avoid giving offense and arousing strong opposition at times even among his coreligionists. But these storms had no lasting consequences and need not detain us here. If his influence and popularity among his Protestant fellow countrymen had been greatly impaired by his conversion, the Civil War gave him an opportunity to restore them. Throughout that struggle his heart and soul were in the Union cause.

⁷⁰ *The Convert*, pp. 3, 185 f.

⁷¹ From 1857 on. Brownson's residence was at Elizabeth, New Jersey.

Sick, aching, and half blind, he drove himself through those four years to help that cause with tongue and pen with all his old fire and energy, and with very real effectiveness. Two of his sons (Catholics, of course, like all his family now) died in the service of their country. At the close of that long agony he published, in 1865, his most important book, *The American Republic: Its Constitution, Tendencies, and Destinies*, which was both a notable contribution to political theory and a monument to his deep patriotism and recovered faith in democracy. Though in broken health, he continued to write unceasingly for Father Hecker's *Catholic World* or other journals, or for his own revived *Review*, facing the national problems of the Reconstruction period or the post-Darwinian attacks upon religion with the vigor of a young man, until, while on a visit to his son Henry in Detroit, death carried him away on April 17, 1876.

In every respect Brownson was a titanic figure. Physically he was almost a giant — tall, sturdy, well-built, with massive head, strong and expressive features, fearless eyes, and long shaggy hair completing the generally leonine appearance. Archbishop Bayley nicknamed him "Ursa Major" — he was so big and hairy and gruff.

The outstanding traits in his character were his intense love of truth and of right, his conscientiousness, and disinterestedness. He marched on boldly through life, speaking the truth and doing the right as he saw it, indifferent to worldly gain, popularity, or prestige, heedless of the impression he might be making, blandly pocketing personal affronts, but losing his temper at people who could not follow an argument or were guilty of bad logic. His heart was kind and affectionate, but it was pretty constantly sacrificed to his head. His whole being was so absorbed in ratiocination that he had little time to cultivate personal relations, social amenities, or the "human" ways of reaching other men's hearts.

As a thinker he was probably not a genius of the first class. He invented no new theories of large importance and launched no great movements. At home in almost every field of thought, he never became thoroughly a master in any of them. Work-

ing and writing always at top speed and pouring out candidly whatever was in his mind at the moment, he naturally made many mistakes, and often had to retract or alter his opinions. Nevertheless, this was undoubtedly one of the most powerful and gifted minds that America has yet produced.

Brownson excelled, in the first place, in his extraordinary and unflagging mental activity and quickness of thought. His ideas came in floods. "He is an intellectual athlete," wrote Hecker in a quite objective study of his friend. "He thinks for a dozen men. . . . No man reads and thinks more than he." ⁷²

Secondly, Brownson amazes us today, in an age of specialization, by the range and versatility of his thought. Religion, philosophy, ethics, politics, economics, history, education, literature, science — scarcely anything human was alien to his interests. In all these fields he had considerable knowledge and something of value to say. Everywhere he showed himself a shrewd observer, and in some instances, as, for example, in his surveys of American economic conditions, he had flashes of insight and previsions that seem like the intuitions of a genius or a prophet.

His forte, however, or at least his greatest delight, was logic and the critical analysis of ideas. Few men have been more adept than he in following an argument or a train of thought to its logical conclusion or in detecting and exposing the fallacies in the popular opinions of the day. It was because of this love of logic and of clear, straight thinking that Hecker pronounced him essentially a man of the thirteenth century and an anomaly among the scholars and divines of the modern age. His attacks upon the idols of his contemporaries diminished his influence at the time; he was usually on the unpopular side; but this does not reduce his importance in the history of American critical thought.

Brownson possessed, in addition, remarkable literary gifts. His style was clear, precise, vigorous, vivid, lofty, and varied. He was a master of metaphor and of irony. So good a judge as George Ripley declared that there were passages in his works

⁷² Rev. Walter Elliott, *The Life of Father Hecker*, p. 180.

that could not be surpassed in the whole range of English literature.

While he is obviously our closest American counterpart to Newman, it seems clear that he was in genius scarcely the equal of the Oxonian. Brownson excelled Newman in strenuous activity and in the breadth of his interests; but he was inferior in depth and subtlety of thought. His literary style, excellent though it be, seems second-rate when compared with Newman's majestic and incomparable prose; and he utterly lacked the mysticism and the poetic gifts of the great Englishman.

At any rate, Brownson holds a unique place in American Catholic history. His conversion was "a great event and made an epoch." It proved in signal fashion that "the Catholic Church has power to win the strongest and most fearless minds, the most generous and disinterested hearts."⁷³ For over thirty years he was the foremost champion of Catholicity in this country. His influence was the widest and his impression the deepest of any pen wielded in the Catholic cause.⁷⁴ It may be doubted whether he had an equal among the American thinkers of his age, and he may still be pronounced in talent the most illustrious convert that the Church in the United States has ever received.⁷⁵

⁷³ Rev. Augustine F. Hewit, "Dr. Brownson," *Catholic World*, XXIII (1876), 374 f.

⁷⁴ So Condé Pallen declared a half-century ago — and the statement would still seem to hold good: *Official Report of the Proceedings of the Catholic Congress Held at Baltimore, Maryland, Nov. 11-12, 1889* (Detroit, 1889), p. 132.

⁷⁵ Brownson's writings have been collected by his son, Henry F. Brownson, *The Works of Orestes A. Brownson* (20 vols.: Detroit, 1883-1887). The latter has also written the chief biography of his father: *Orestes A. Brownson's Early, Middle, and Later Life* (3 vols.: Detroit, 1898-1900). An excellent biography by a non-Catholic is that of Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *Orestes A. Brownson: a Pilgrim's Progress* (Boston, 1939). The most recent biographies by Catholic writers are: Doran Whalen, *Granite for God's House* (New York, 1941); and Theodore Maynard, *Orestes Brownson: Yankee, Radical, Catholic* (*ibid.*, 1943).

CHAPTER XIII

THE END OF AN EPISCOPATE

I

WHILE THE PRECEDING PAGES have illustrated in very numerous ways the work accomplished by Bishop Fenwick, it remains to sketch the character and personality of the man who for twenty-one years had labored so valiantly and fruitfully for the up-building of the Church in New England.

In marked contrast to his delicate and rather tiny predecessor, Bishop Fenwick was built on ample lines. He is said in his later years to have weighed about three hundred pounds.¹ His complexion was so swarthy and his hair and eyes were so dark, as with other members of his family, that among Georgetown students the quite improbable story circulated that there was a strain of Indian blood in the Fenwicks.² At all events, his robust frame and strong, if not handsome, features seemed to radiate health, vitality, and energy. Almost to the last year of his life he could boast that he knew sickness only from seeing it in others.

His personality appeared to combine the traits of four rather distinct types of men: the Southern gentleman, the scholar, the practical man of affairs, and the apostle.

The Southern gentleman appears in his hearty, frank, and sunny disposition; his constant jests and endless flow of genial talk; his warm hospitality; his easy and dignified bearing; his love of the country and of the out-of-doors, of guns and dogs and fishing-rods, of Maryland society and ways. Among the "Yankees" he was always something of an exile. While quite at home with a President of the United States, a Governor of

¹ *Boston Daily Bee*, Aug. 13, 1846.

² J. Fairfax McLaughlin, "Father George Fenwick, S.J.," *U.S. Cath. Hist. Magazine*, I (1887), 396.

Canada, or a foreign ambassador, he was evidently not greatly attracted towards the social aristocracy of New England. At first he left them severely alone, and, unlike his predecessor, took no part in the social or civic life of the community. Later he seems to have felt it wise to establish more contacts with non-Catholic circles, but he never obtained, and doubtless never desired, anything like that universal and exuberant popularity which Bishop Cheverus had enjoyed among Protestants.

Bishop Fenwick's intellectual powers and attainments were of a distinctly high order. In the ecclesiastical sciences, especially apologetics, in the classics, and in history, particularly that of his own country, he might be pronounced an eminent scholar. Brownson, who was assuredly no mean judge, declared:

He seemed to have read everything, and to have retained all he read. We never, in our intercourse with him, knew a subject to be broached of which he was ignorant. . . . No matter what the subject, however obscure or remote from his professional studies, on which you sought information, he could either give it or direct you at once to the source whence you could obtain it. . . . Upon the whole, he left on us the impression of a man of rare natural powers, of varied and profound learning, and of being the best informed man we have ever had the honor of meeting. . . .³

Throughout his life Bishop Fenwick felt the scholar's impulse to write and to publish. But pressing official duties or financial obstacles thwarted nearly all such plans and, save for his excursions into journalism, forced him to confine himself to small publications intended for immediate practical aims. His editing of *The Laity's Directory* for the year 1822 has already been mentioned. About 1829 he began work upon what was intended to be a large volume describing in detail the condition of the Church in the United States, for which he col-

³ Orestes A. Brownson, "The Right Reverend Benedict Joseph Fenwick, Second Bishop of the Diocese of Boston," *Brownson's Quarterly Review*, III (Oct., 1846), 526 f.

lected data from his fellow bishops and other clergymen throughout the country. This *Catholic Repository* was to have been published in 1832, but failed to appear, presumably because a sufficient number of subscribers could not be obtained. Another project upon which he toiled intermittently for years was that for a history of his diocese down to 1829. Completed between 1833 and 1836, apparently, these *Memoirs to Serve for the Future Ecclesiastical History of the Diocess of Boston* almost attained publication in 1842. Only the day before the first sheets were to have been sent to the printer, the Bishop decided that he had not money enough to publish this book and build Holy Cross College at the same time. For the present then Clio would have to wait for the sake of the other muses.⁴ As a matter of fact, this voluminous and precious manuscript — an original source of unique importance for the early history of the organized Church in New England — is still awaiting publication, although John Gilmary Shea and other historians who have had access to the Boston diocesan archives have made extensive use of it. Like many other bishops of his day, but more assiduously and copiously than most of them, Bishop Fenwick kept a diocesan journal, a day by day record of his official transactions and of events that interested him. While not intended by him for publication, these *Memoranda of the Diocess of Boston* also form an historical source of first-class importance. In the years around 1830 he published a large number of tracts to counteract those circulated by the enemies of the Church, and in 1840 he brought forth a *Church Music Book* which was one of the earliest and best Catholic compilations of the kind to be issued in this country. This work was his major contribution to a cause which he had very much at heart. An excellent singer and a lover of music, he was much concerned over the low state into which it had fallen in the Catholic churches of the country, in two thirds of which, he estimated, there was no singing at all, and too often it seemed that even the clergy knew nothing of Gregorian chant and that

⁴ Bishop Fenwick to Rev. George Fenwick, S.J., Dec. 8, 1842 (*Fordham Arch.*, 213 G 5).

congregations "know as much about music of any kind as they do about Greek." ⁵

Unlike many scholars, Bishop Fenwick was also a practical man of affairs, a born leader and executive, richly endowed with judgment, prudence, creative imagination, energy, and initiative, and with a remarkable range of interests and aptitudes. He managed the finances of his diocese, drafted designs for new churches or colleges, turned out with compass and chain to survey his land, or planted an orchard as easily as he preached sermons, reformed Church music, edited newspapers, or wrote historical treatises. So naturally was he the master spirit in any circle in which he might be thrown that Brownson declared he never knew any other great man to surpass or equal him in this respect; and the same writer averred that he showed such practical talents in the administration of his diocese as would have fitted him to govern a nation with equal ease and success.⁶

But, above all, Bishop Fenwick was, of course, the consecrated man of God and a hero of the apostolate. From his revered mother and in the school of St. Ignatius he had gained a deep and wholesouled piety and the secret of all perfection, *Vince teipsum*. Nearly forty years in the sacred ministry had steeled him in the practice of doing not his own will, but that of Him who sent him. The fruits of this self-conquest appeared in the remarkable kindness, gentleness, and patience which he

⁵ Letter to Bishop Rosati, Jan. 22, 1840, in *Ill. Cath. Hist. Rev.*, X, 164 f. Dr. Fenwick first started to issue a *Church Music Book* in 1833, but when only a few copies had been printed, a fire in the printer's house destroyed the plates. Seven years later he issued a much larger and richer compilation (modestly concealing his own share in its editing) under the title *The Morning and Evening Service of the Catholic Church, Comprising a Choice Collection of Gregorian and Other Masses; Litanies, Psalms, Sacred Hymns, Anthems, Versicles, and Motetts. . . . Compiled and Respectfully Dedicated to Rt. Rev. Dr. Fenwick by R. Garbett, Professor of Music* (New York, 1840). Two other short compositions of Dr. Fenwick's have been printed: *A Sermon Delivered in the Roman Catholic Church, New York, on Sunday Evening, February 25, 1810, for the Benefit of the City Dispensary*, by Rev. B. J. Fenwick (New York, 1810); and "Brief Account of the Settlement of Maryland, with a Notice of St. Inigoes, by B.B.B." [Benedict, Bishop of Boston], in *Woodstock Letters*, IX (1880), 167-182.

⁶ *Loc. cit.*, pp. 521, 527.

constantly displayed in his intercourse with all kinds and conditions of people; his consideration for the feelings of everyone around him; his genuinely paternal interest in every member of his flock; his active sympathy for all who were in any way afflicted or distressed.

"Patience, patience, patience!" — the word continually crops up in his letters; and how much he had had need of it! Of all the Bishops of Boston he was probably the one most sorely tried, but trials only showed him at his very best. The most sublime moment of his life was on that evening after the burning of the Convent when, with a wellnigh broken heart, he gathered his people to exhort them to love their enemies. Gradually all the better elements in the community came to appreciate and to revere what one non-Catholic writer called the "calm, forbearing, and truly apostolic course of Bishop Fenwick."⁷ And if further evidence were needed of his liberality and charity, it would be supplied by the address which he delivered in Maryland in 1842 at the celebration commemorating the landing of the Catholic Pilgrims in 1634. On that occasion, after lauding the founders of Maryland for having, when driven from home by religious persecution, hastened to establish here the principles of religious and civil liberty more perfectly than was done in any other colony, he exhorted his hearers to emulate their Catholic ancestors in the virtues of charity and Christian forbearance: to forgive all who persecuted or injured them, to exercise a boundless benevolence towards all who differed from them in religious matters, to forget, indeed, that there existed among their fellow countrymen a division in religion, and to remember only that they were all children of the same Heavenly Father.⁸

Perhaps the most outstanding trait of Bishop Fenwick was his humility. Of that Brownson wrote:

It gave to his whole character that placid beauty, and that inexpressible charm, which made his society so delightful, and

⁷*Pilot*, May 7, 1842, quoting a letter from "An American Citizen" in the *Bay State Democrat*.

⁸*Pilot*, May 21, 1842; *Georgetown Coll. Arch.*, 130.

which so endeared him to our hearts. He rarely spoke of himself, and when he did, it was always evident that his mind was not preoccupied with himself. . . . He was not merely indifferent to praise, but seemed to have risen to that sublime degree of humility which takes pleasure in being contemned. He was happy in opportunities to humble himself the deeper before God. Through grace his spirit had become as sweet, as gentle, as docile, as that of the little child, of whom our Saviour said, — "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." He had long ceased to live for himself, and he was incapable of thinking how this or that would or would not affect his own reputation. . . . He made himself nothing for Christ's sake and was free and strong for whatever there was to do. It was a lesson and a blessing to contemplate one so truly eminent for his abilities and acquirements, able to rank with the greatest men and most learned scholars of the age, making himself of no account, completely annihilating himself, for the love of God and the good of souls, and emulous only of serving the lowest and assisting those who were most in need of being assisted. . . .⁹

It would have been difficult to surpass him for zeal and activity as a shepherd of souls. Through much of his episcopate he did the work of a parish priest at the Cathedral, preaching incessantly — sometimes once or twice daily during Lent — hearing confessions, baptizing, marrying, burying, visiting the sick and the poor, instructing converts. He traveled indefatigably about his vast diocese to hunt up and minister to stray Catholics, organize new congregations, launch or dedicate new churches, administer Confirmation, adjust difficulties, allay disputes, etc., etc. What such traveling meant in those days it is not easy for us to imagine. One day early in 1835 he drove to Lowell in a northeast storm, with the horse up to his knees and the wheels up to the hub in mud, and six hours were required for the journey.¹⁰ He traveled through the forests of Maine by canoe, paddled by Indians. He journeyed across the White Mountains one wintry day in an open wagon for fifty miles, with a driving snowstorm blowing in his face, until the wagon broke down and he had to walk two miles through the snow

⁹ *Loc. cit.*, pp. 528 f.

¹⁰ *Memoranda*, April 4, 1835.

to a farmhouse.¹¹ Through at least the first half of his episcopate he traveled chiefly by stagecoaches, which often started at 2 or 3 A.M., and which had a sad tendency to break down, topple over, or hurl the Bishop into the road or into a pool of water. "Poor as Job's turkey"; so busy that "I have not even time to sneeze"; "It is . . . Mungo here, Mungo there, and Mungo everywhere with me" — in such phrases he laughed over his trials.¹² But always the solicitude for all the churches and the love of Christ pressed him, and through twenty-one years he gave himself without stint or measure.

In the affairs of the American Church at large Bishop Fenwick evidently took an important part, although the sources available do not make it possible to trace his activity in detail. He joined forces with Bishop England in urging Archbishop Whitfield to convoke the first Provincial Council of Baltimore, and in the ensuing gatherings of the hierarchy he was, quite certainly, one of the most influential participants. He was Promotor of the first four Provincial Councils (1829, 1833, 1837, 1840), and, as senior bishop, a leading figure in the fifth (1843). His letter-book shows him in frequent correspondence with most of the members of the American hierarchy, and in particularly close relations in the earlier years with Bishop England, of Charleston, and Bishop Edward Fenwick, of Cincinnati, and in the later years with Bishop Rosati, of St. Louis, and Bishop Hughes, of New York. As the closest friend and the most trusted adviser of Archbishop Eccleston, who succeeded to the Metropolitan See of Baltimore in 1834, he was in a position to have a most important voice in the affairs of the American Church.¹³

¹¹ *Ibid.*, Nov. 30, 1830.

¹² Letters to Rev. George Fenwick, S.J., July 8, 1830, June 2, 1834, Oct. 31, 1830 (*Fordham Arch.*, 209 M 5, 211 W 10, 209 K 22).

¹³ The chief contemporary sketches of Bishop Fenwick's character are: first and foremost, that by Brownson, already so frequently cited here; Rev. Charles H. Stonestreet, S.J., *Discourse on the Right Revd. Benedict J. Fenwick, D.D., Bishop of Boston; Pronounced in St. John's Church, Frederick, Maryland, September 11, 1846, on the Occasion of a Solemn Service for the Repose of His Soul* (Frederick, n.d.); and the eulogy pronounced by Bishop Hughes at the month's mind requiem Mass at the Boston Cathedral (*Pilot*, Sept. 19, 1846). Bishop Fenwick's portrait was painted at least three times: in 1832 by George

II

The robust health which Bishop Fenwick had so long enjoyed began to break down in November, 1845, not long after he had entered into his sixty-fourth year. By December it was clear that he was suffering from an enlargement of the heart, to which other complications were added, including, especially, the dropsy which in January led to such a swelling of the legs that he could no longer say Mass. His physicians informed him that his disease was very likely to prove fatal. While dissenting from this opinion — with characteristic optimism — he received the communication without the slightest sign of emotion and proceeded to set his affairs in order and to prepare himself for the great ordeal.

For eight months his illness dragged on, with periods of apparent improvement, which, however, deceived neither his doctors nor his close friends. During all this time he was never able to lie down in a bed, but had to snatch what rest he could while bolstered up in a chair. Probably he was seldom free from pain. But throughout it all he remained calm, cheerful, and playful as ever, never uttering a word of complaint or anxiety, mentioning his illness only to jest about it, eager to make friends and visitors forget that he was sick and dying. He continued to work and to go about, as far as he could. During the spring and early summer he traveled to Worcester almost weekly to visit the college and to push through plans for its enlargement. On June 28th he preached — for the last time — at St. Nicholas', East Boston, and a newspaper relates that "every heart leaped with joy when the venerable Prelate ascended the altar."¹⁴ As late as July 29th he attended the "Exhibition Day" at Holy Cross and awarded the prizes; and on August 3rd, hardly more than a week before his death, he

Healy, in 1834 by Simpson, and early in 1845, at the request of Andrew Carney, by John Pope. This last portrait, which Bishop Fitzpatrick found "the most perfect representation of the original which art can furnish," is the one familiar to us today.

¹⁴ *Pilot*, July 11, 1846.

drove over to Chelsea to be with the children of his beloved Orphan Asylum, who were spending a day in the country.

That was the last time he went out. A week of excessively hot weather followed, which, in his condition, proved extremely oppressive. On Friday, August 7th, when the thermometer had reached 103°, he could still sit out on the piazza until after ten in the evening, entertaining the clergy of the Cathedral with anecdotes and mirth. But next morning a great change for the worse was visible. At the advice of the doctors, Bishop Fitzpatrick informed him that death might not be far away, and that evening administered to him the Last Sacraments. Henceforth the sufferer sank steadily. His mind remained clear, however; he followed with perfect recollection and piety the devotions that were continually offered up around him; and as long as his voice held out, he still spoke with his habitual calmness and "that playfulness so remarkable in his character."¹⁵ By Tuesday morning, August 11th — the anniversary of "Mount Benedict" — the end was evidently at hand. Too feeble now to speak aloud, the Bishop remained in constant prayer, as was shown by the continual movement of his lips and his frequent efforts to make the sign of the cross. Around him were Bishop Fitzpatrick and Sister Ann Alexis, both of whom had scarcely left his side since Saturday, a few other nuns, the clergy of the Cathedral, and some members of the congregation. Towards 11:30 A.M. these faithful watchers caught the last intelligible words whispered by the dying prelate: *In Te, Domine, speravi; non confundar in aeternum*. A few minutes later the agony came upon him; with a glance of mute appeal he lurched forward into the arms of his Coadjutor, and then peacefully breathed his last.

For three days the faithful, and, indeed, the whole community, had been awaiting the dreaded event. Mayor Josiah Quincy, Jr., had but expressed the wellnigh universal sympathy when on the previous Sunday he had ordered the streets around the Cathedral to be barred to wheeled traffic and covered with tar, in order that noise might not disturb the dying

¹⁵ *Memoranda*, Aug. 11, 1846 (Bishop Fitzpatrick's entry).

man. Now that the event had happened, all Boston joined in demonstrations of grief, love, and reverence such as the city had rarely witnessed. During the two days that the body lay in state in the Cathedral, fifty thousand persons, it was estimated, came to gaze for the last time upon that beloved face, or reverently to kiss their Bishop's feet, and to pray for his soul. "And among these the poor were the most numerous and the most conspicuous, for he had loved the poor, and the poor in heartfelt gratitude moaned in grief for their great loss."¹⁶ Throngs remained in the church throughout the night. Protestants seemed to vie with Catholics in mourning the deceased prelate, and, except for a few irreconcilable Evangelical organs, the press with one accord paid him high tribute. Bishop Fenwick, said the *Transcript*, was "universally lamented by a community in which he had few enemies."¹⁷ Succeeding Bishop Cheverus, the *Courier* remarked, he "may be truly said to have succeeded both to his piety and virtues, and to his claim to the reverence and affection of our community." He was "a learned scholar . . . a calm, far-seeing, and zealous prelate, a good Christian, a good citizen, a good man. *Multis ille flebilis occidit.*"¹⁸

The funeral was held on August 13th. Ten thousand people thronged the Cathedral and the streets and open spaces about it during the services. The bell of the Federal Street Unitarian Church was tolled for the Catholic Bishop, just as four years before, alone among the non-Unitarian churches of Boston, the Cathedral had tolled its bell during the funeral of Dr. Channing, the friend of both Bishops Fenwick and Cheverus. Among the outside members of the hierarchy only Bishop Hughes was present, the others not receiving word in time because of difficulties with the new electric telegraph. Bishop Fitzpatrick celebrated the solemn High Mass, with Rev. John J. Williams as master of ceremonies; and Rev. Nicholas O'Brien preached the eulogy — his voice frequently breaking with emotion. "Awe depicted on every countenance and all hearts bursting with grief" — so Bishop Fitzpatrick described that great gathering.¹⁹

¹⁶ *Pilot*, Aug. 29, 1846.

¹⁷ Aug. 11, 1846.

¹⁸ Aug. 12, 1846.

¹⁹ *Memoranda*, Aug. 13, 1846.

The body was to be taken to Worcester for burial, and the new Bishop, out of regard for certain well-known prejudices, had at first resolved to convey it across the city as quietly and unobtrusively as possible. Such was the atmosphere at the close of the Mass, however, that he reversed this decision and determined to "venture a religious procession through Boston." Before an immense concourse of people, everywhere manifesting the most profound respect, amid a solemn stillness pervading the busiest part of the city at the busiest hour of the day, a long procession moved through Franklin, Federal, Summer, Washington, and Beach Streets to the railway station. It consisted of the cross-bearer, Father Brasseur de Bourbourg, with two priests as acolytes; virtually all the clergy of the Diocese, in surplice and stole; Bishops Fitzpatrick and Hughes, with their chaplains, all in appropriate vestments; the hearse, attended by acolytes carrying mitre and crozier; the Sisters of Charity, with their orphans; and a large number of religious and charitable societies. The Miserere, the Introit and Kyrie of the requiem Mass, and Latin psalms rang out through the hushed streets.

About one thousand persons escorted the corpse by special train to Worcester, where again there was a solemn procession from the station to Mount St. James. There, "in the grave chosen and indicated by himself," in the college which he had founded and which is his finest monument, the body of the great and good Bishop Fenwick was laid to rest.

III

The episcopate, the history of which has here been narrated, marked the great turning-point in the fortunes of the Church in New England. For two centuries manifold and heroic efforts had been made to implant Catholicism in this region, but the visible results had been extremely slight. It was in Bishop Fenwick's time that the grain of mustard seed at last began to grow into a great tree. Since then the Church's progress has been immense and continuous. The turning of

the tide was principally caused, of course, by Irish immigration. But to Bishop Fenwick belongs a large share of the credit. He was exactly the man for the situation, and he made the most of it. He did transform one of the feeblest of dioceses into one of the strongest in the American Church at that time. He brought Catholicism into wellnigh every part of New England. He built up, for the first time here, a large body of clergy, and labored hard to instill into them proper standards of discipline and high priestly ideals. He vigorously opposed and in the main stamped out "Trusteeism," which had wrought such havoc elsewhere. He first fixed the conditions of church life and parochial organization and the methods of handling diocesan business. In his zeal for Catholic education in all forms, for Catholic charities, for high standards in preaching and public worship, for proper Church music, for spreading Catholic literature, for Catholic journalism, for organizing the laity for what would nowadays be called "Catholic Action," he did all that was possible in his circumstances and marked out paths for the future. He gave us our first Catholic college, our first charitable institution, our first permanent religious orders, our first permanent Catholic newspaper. If Father Matignon and Bishop Cheverus were the true founders of the Diocese of Boston, Bishop Fenwick deserves to be called its organizer. More even than those two illustrious predecessors, he stamped his character upon this Diocese. In the face of the gravest difficulties, he accomplished a magnificent and enduring work.

PART IV

THE DIOCESE UNDER
BISHOP JOHN BERNARD FITZPATRICK
(1846-1866)

BY EDWARD T. HARRINGTON

CHAPTER I

JOHN BERNARD FITZPATRICK

I

I am now wholly and irrevocably consecrated to God. The Lord is my portion, and my inheritance, and His house will be my dwelling forever. You must pray that every day, by increase of fervor, I may supply whatever may have been wanting in the sincerity and universality of my offering; that my sacrifice may be without reserve, and, above all, without return to anything that this world may offer; that all my toils and labors, all my talents and capacities, all my days of life, may be to the last breath devoted generously, and exclusively to the service of God and the salvation of souls.¹

IT WAS JOHN BERNARD FITZPATRICK who wrote these humble and devout lines. The occasion was his ordination to the priesthood. He had just completed a long and brilliant scholastic career as a seminarian, and, as his words indicate, had thoroughly nourished his soul with the grace of God; now he was about to begin a life's work that was to take him far into the fields that Christ had pointed out many centuries before as waiting for harvesters. Ordained a priest on June 13, 1840, he was within a few years to receive the full power conferred by Christ upon His Apostles, and become a bishop. As the head of the Diocese of Boston he was destined to lead it through days when a vast influx of Catholic Irish overwhelmed it, days of extraordinary growth, days of vicious political and religious persecution, days charged with the bitterness and contentions of wars, a period that brought into full flower the seeds strewn by pioneer priests and bishops.

¹From a letter of Bishop Fitzpatrick's to his sister Eleanor Fitzpatrick, quoted by Father George F. Haskins in a panegyric preached in SS. Peter and Paul's Church, South Boston. George F. Haskins, *A Panegyric on the Rt. Rev. John B. Fitzpatrick, D.D., In Memoriam of Rt. Rev. John B. Fitzpatrick* (Boston, 1866), p. 34.

John Fitzpatrick was born in Boston on November 15, 1812.² Bernard, his father, had created for himself in the Boston Irish community a rather unique position for a person of his race in those days. He was one of the few who had been able to acquire a business of his own. He was a tailor, and by his industry saved enough money to open a shop and establish a good business. A man of exceptional intelligence, unquestioned integrity, and sound piety, his character was so attractive as to secure for him a patriarchal position amongst his countrymen. Both Protestant and Catholic Irishmen trusted and respected him, and showed their confidence by liberal honors in that ancient organization of the sons of Erin, the Charitable Irish Society. He was the Keeper of the Silver Key in 1828, Vice-President in the following year, and in 1830 the honor of the office of President was voted to him.³ Nor was the recognition given to him confined to laymen. Both Father Matignon and Bishop Cheverus found his company worth while, and Bishop Fenwick took a deep interest in his family, guiding his son, John, to the priesthood.

Eleanor Fitzpatrick, Bernard's wife, was a remarkable woman who had as respected a place amongst her people as did her husband. Nor was she without claim to some of those traditions that her Yankee neighbors rightly cherished. She was, according to the records of the surviving descendants of the Fitzpatrick line, the daughter of James Flinn, a Revolutionary soldier. Like many another family history, the account of this man and his progeny must necessarily have in it lacunae that the most careful investigation cannot completely fill. Birth, baptismal, marriage, and death records were not kept, or have disappeared. The historian is forced to rely on tradition, and in this source he will often find omissions or additions that greatly trouble him.

James Flinn was born in Ireland in 1743. He emigrated to

² Holy Cross Cathedral, *Baptismal Register*, 1812 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

³ *The Constitution and By-Laws of the Charitable Irish Society of Boston* (Boston, 1876), p. 140. See also a clipping about his death in a volume in St. John's Seminary Library entitled: M. Carey, *Vindiciae Hibernicae; or, Ireland Vindicated* (Philadelphia, 1828).



RT. REV. JOHN BERNARD FITZPATRICK
Third Bishop of Boston

the Colonies in 1769, landing at Philadelphia. Here, in the same year, he met and married Mary Kinsella. The couple moved to Boston, where Eleanor, the Bishop's mother, was born on April 10, 1770. During the critical times in Boston that preceded the Revolution, it is probable that the mother and children (there was more than one) went back to Ireland. James Flinn enlisted in the militia during the War, serving under Captain Stephen Smith in Colonel Benjamin Foster's Massachusetts regiment. He died in 1802, and was buried in that section of the Central Burying Ground that was later destroyed when the Boylston Street Subway was built. Mary Flinn died in 1790. Eleanor Flinn married Bernard Fitzpatrick in 1798, either in Tullamore, Ireland, or Baltimore, Maryland. In 1805 the couple came to Boston, and by 1807 they were living in Lindell's Lane. Bernard Fitzpatrick's name appears frequently in the old Holy Cross Cathedral records as purchaser of a pew, the owner of a grave in St. Augustine's Cemetery, and a subscriber to various funds.⁴

⁴I have made many attempts to solve the problem of Bishop Fitzpatrick's ancestry. The family account would be fully acceptable if it were not for the fact that records, such as newspaper accounts of Bishop Fitzpatrick's death, say that his parents came from Tullamore, Ireland, and make no mention of James Flinn. There is, moreover, a letter from the Bishop to his mother in which he mentions her youthful days in Ireland (John B. Fitzpatrick to Mrs. Eleanor Fitzpatrick, Jan. 23, 1839, *Boland Collection*). However, there is a strong family tradition to the effect that Mary Flinn and her children did go back to Ireland at the time of the American Revolution, and I feel justified in believing that this is the basis of the Tullamore story.

In searching for the facts, I have investigated the following sources:

1. The family papers of the Boland sisters of Worcester, descendants of the Bishop's sister Eleanor (Fitzpatrick) Boland. The Misses Boland kindly allowed me to go through the family letters of three generations looking for some clue.
2. Mr. B. O'Riordan, the Irish Consul in Boston, kindly assumed the task of asking his Government to trace the Flinn and Fitzpatrick histories in the ecclesiastical and civil records of Tullamore, Ireland. Nothing could be found.
3. The Secretary of the Charitable Irish Society searched their records for a clue.
4. The Rev. James H. Willet searched the records of St. Joseph's Church, Bardstown, Kentucky, the near-by parish of St. Thomas, and the Bardstown Courthouse Records, and could find no evidence.
5. The records of Old St. Peter's, Baltimore, Maryland (*Baltimore Cathedral Arch.*) were consulted by Father Robert Lord.
6. The marriage, birth, and death records of the cities of Boston and Worcester were searched.
7. Various volumes dealing with the histories of old Boston cemeteries were read.
8. The Holy Cross Cathedral Records (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*) gave no evidence

As a boy John studied successively at the Mason Street School (known after 1821 as the Adams School);⁵ at the School for Mutual Instruction, where in 1823 he received a Franklin Medal for outstanding scholarship; and at the Boylston School, where he earned another medal in 1826.⁶ Indeed, his aptitude for intellectual achievement was so pronounced that his masters urged his father to give him all the training necessary for his entrance into a learned profession,⁷ and he was sent to the Boston Public Latin School in 1826. Here, amongst a group of capable scholars, he was preëminent.

By this time Father Matignon, who knew the family well, was dead, and John had come under the influence of Bishop Cheverus, an influence that certainly must have been charged with all the spiritual force of that great character. And when Bishop Cheverus had left for France, there came the kindly Bishop Fenwick, whose previous experience with boys would naturally lead to an interest in those of his congregation. Between the two a bond was established that became even firmer as the years went by, a bond that found its strength, on the one side, in the deep paternal affection of the Bishop for this spiritual son of his, and, on the other, in the discovery made by the boy that Bishop Fenwick was a wise and judicious director to whom he could turn for guidance and advice. Anyone who has watched children grow, has seen them take the first tentative steps towards one vocation or another, and has helped in guiding those first essays, can appreciate the Bishop's delight as he saw gradually unfolding within the boy's mind a vocation to the priesthood. He encouraged him, he checked

except what is told in the text concerning Bernard Fitzpatrick's financial account. These may be found in: *Diocese of Boston Archives, Holy Cross Church Accounts 1793-1807*, vol. I, pp. 144, 148, 246, 250, 252, 254, 256, 258, 260. Some pages contain more than one notation (bound photostatic volume); *Diocese of Boston Archives, Holy Cross Church Subscribers, St. Augustine Subscribers Church Account, 1823-1827*, vol. II, pp. 28, 38 (bound photostatic volume).

9. James Flinn's war record can be found in *Daughters of the American Revolution, Lineage Book* 70, 208, no. 69591.

⁵ Pauline Holmes, M.A., *A Tercentenary History of the Boston Public Latin School, 1635-1935* (Cambridge, 1935), pp. 394-395.

⁶ *The Association of Franklin Medal Scholars* (Boston, 1858), pp. 20, 26.

⁷ Rev. John Pierce, of Brookline, *Memoirs* (*Mass. Hist. Soc. Arch.*), Aug., 1846.

him, admonished and inspired him; perhaps, as the years went by, even a hope developed that some day, God willing, he could pass to this handsome, virtuous, and intelligent young man, this protégé of his, the care of the Boston Diocese.

John was not a bookish sort of lad who knew nothing of those youthful pleasures that are the spice of early years; "he was kind-hearted, affable, and generous. Outspoken, frank, sparkling with wit and humor."

Living for some years on Broad and Commercial Streets, he grew up near the Boston waterfront, and, like all boys of those days, was drawn to the wharves to roam from ship to ship, trying to get a glimpse of the strange cargoes that were hoisted out of the holds, questioning the sailors, listening to many a tall tale spun by some old salt, invading, with his friend George Cabot,⁸ the offices of shipping firms, seeking stamps from foreign lands. And there was the tempting opportunity on a hot summer day to go down to the end of some dock and dive into the cool waters of the harbor. In the winter there was skating on the Frog Pond, coasting on the Common, and the uproarious snowball battles of the Latin School boys. Then, too, there were the mornings when he had to serve at the altar, and his mother sent him, slicked and polished, to the Cathedral; quick dashes from Commercial Street or Broad Street to Franklin Street, and, later on, the short walk down narrow dark Theatre Alley, the final residence of his parents, to the edifice that became so well known and so beloved as the years went by. All in all, it was a happy life that was centred in a fine Catholic family, in which there were five children, two girls and three boys, of whom Eleanor, a lifelong confidant and ally, was his favorite.

When he was almost seventeen years of age, he had determined to study for the priesthood, and the Bishop sent him off to Montreal and the College of Saint-Sulpice to begin courses that would lay a foundation for his theological studies.

It would be tedious to record that John once more repeated his scholastic triumphs. To relate that his craftsmanship as a

⁸Henry Cabot Lodge, *Early Memories* (New York, 1913), p. 56.

student was excellent would be to tell only of the expected evolution of a naturally brilliant intellect. He plunged into his work, laboring and toiling to derive from his studies all the knowledge that he possibly could. His efforts brought their reward. At the end of his philosophy course, after a public disputation before four bishops and the Governor of the Province, during which he successfully defended his theses against J. W. Beaudry, later a famous Canadian jurist, and Ambrose Manahan, who was to be a priest under him in the years to come in the Boston Diocese, he was appointed one of the College tutors. What was more important than this, however, was his spiritual progress. Did it keep pace with his mental growth? It did. He was a youth of fervent piety, eagerly laying up a store of spiritual knowledge, and striving to increase the grace of God in his soul, to mold his character and habits after those of his Divine Model. Recalling those days a pupil of his wrote: "I never saw better expressed than in his person the portrait of a cleric traced by the Council of Trent."⁹

It was not an easy life. There were sacrifices, privations, long hours of study, difficulties in adjusting himself to the language, and, at one time, deep disgust with some misguided students who "were full of a spirit of false liberty. . . ." ¹⁰ These youths created a commotion that was magnified into a riot by the time it reached the pages of the Boston papers. His worst experience, however, was the death of his father on September 4, 1831. There had always been a deep love and understanding between the two; the father was justly proud of his son's success, had constantly encouraged him in his efforts, and had sought to give him every opportunity to improve himself. Even when his last illness struck him down and week after week of suffering went by, he would not allow the family to reveal his condition to John, lest it might interfere with his studies.¹¹ Unfortunately, during his last days, when it was evi-

⁹ *Pilot*, March 31, 1866.

¹⁰ J. B. Fitzpatrick to J. King, Dec. 29, 1830 (*Boland Collection*). This letter and a number of others are in the possession of the Misses Boland, of Worcester. These letters will be referred to as the *Boland Collection*.

¹¹ Tobias Boland to John B. F. Boland, March 1, 1866 (*Boland Collection*).

dent that Bernard would not survive and it became imperative that John should be told, someone unwisely forbade the family to do so. The result was that the news of the sickness and death came to the young man quite unexpectedly, and he was shocked into the very depths of sorrow. Eleanor wrote to him describing the situation, and John, sorely tried by the experience, answered:

I could not help feeling considerable surprise and no little displeasure. People may talk as much as they wish, and pile till they are tired their cold arguments one upon another. But I cannot enter into speculation that seems to be so void of feeling. No, I can never believe that it would have been foolish for me to go a few hundred miles for the sake of seeing my dying father, for the sake of bidding adieu to the most kind, the most tender of parents, and of receiving from him one last embrace or even one look before he left the world forever. I can never believe that it would have been injurious to me to witness his paternal suffering, his saintly death, to kneel by his bedside to receive his last instruction and his paternal benediction. Such words sound to me like the language of the insensible.

The one consolation for the grief-stricken youth was that his scholastic achievement and advance in his vocation were a solace to his father, whose last illness was made so much more difficult by the fact that he could not live to see his son stand before the altar of God. With this in mind, John went on to tell his sister with true humility:

When I read in your letter that the intelligence my father received of me was so pleasing to him, what joy did I feel. Ah, could you only perceive the gratification it afforded me! It repaid me, it was a twofold reward for all the privations, the labors, the fatigues I have endured since I left home. Friendship for my father and the desire of rendering him happy may, without doubt, have induced people to exaggerate my merits. But still I have afforded a foundation to the exaggerations. I have contributed to sweeten his dying moments, to raise his desponding spirits, and perhaps, as you have said, to impart a

new strength to his frame and prolong for a moment his closing existence. I am satisfied.¹²

Having completed his preparatory course at Montreal, the young neophyte left for Boston at the beginning of August, 1837, and began to prepare to go to the Seminary of Saint-Sulpice at Paris for his theological studies. It was during this period that the later Father George Haskins, then a non-Catholic, first saw the future Bishop of Boston. His office as Overseer of the Poor brought him an invitation to attend the annual dinner of the Boston Latin School at Faneuil Hall on August 23rd, and there, seated amidst a distinguished gathering that included Governor Edward Everett, Mayor Samuel Eliot, President Quincy of Harvard, General Dearborn, and many other notable persons, was young Fitzpatrick. His presence excited curiosity, and there were many inquiries as to his identity, but it was not until the end of the dinner that the question was answered; then Major Benjamin Russell arose, called for order, and, as Father Haskins recalled the incident, made a very gracious introduction:

Mr. Mayor, I wish to introduce a young man, a native of Boston, of Irish parentage, and a Roman Catholic. He has been educated in our schools and is a medal scholar of more than one of them. This young man has just graduated with the highest honors at the celebrated college of Montreal in Canada. He is about to visit France with a view to perfect his education. Boston and her schools may be proud of such a man and such a scholar. Mr. Mayor and gentlemen, I have the honor of presenting to you Mr. John Bernard Fitzpatrick.¹³

It was a moment that would have embarrassed a person more experienced with such affairs, but young Mr. Fitzpatrick carried it off very well. Gracefully and easily, with modesty and yet with quiet confidence, he faced his audience and replied to this frank and flattering introduction in one of those passing speeches that no one bothers to record; but Father Haskins says that it secured "marked attention" and "elicited frequent and enthusiastic applause."¹⁴

¹² J. B. Fitzpatrick to Eleanor Fitzpatrick, Oct. 9, 1831 (*Boland Collection*).

¹³ Father Haskins, *A Panegyric*, p. 33.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

II

When John Fitzpatrick arrived at Saint-Sulpice, he was the only student from the United States amongst two hundred who were natives of France and other parts of Europe. Despite this isolated position, he does not seem to have had any great difficulty in adjusting himself to his new situation. He was very proficient in the French language and this gave him an immediate entrance into the society of his fellow seminarians, while his attractive personality, outstanding intellectual qualities, and sincere endeavor to practice the priestly virtues soon secured for him a respected place in the community. Quick to follow, perceive, and absorb the meaning and force of an argument in a theological dissertation, and having acquired, through study and reading, an extensive fund of valuable knowledge, he was soon repeating the scholastic triumphs of former years. He was one of the five students chosen to preside at theological conferences. The duty of giving religious instructions to the children of prominent families living in that most aristocratic part of Paris, the Faubourg Saint-Germain, was assigned to him. Nor did he confine himself merely to his books. The Old World and its culture attracted him, and he did not neglect his opportunities. There were visits to art galleries and museums, attendance at the sermons of the finest preachers of the day, and the rapt drinking in, with a music-lover's appreciation, of the harmonies of the grand choirs and organs. One glorious summer vacation was spent in the beautiful Normandy country with the Lecerne family of Caen.¹⁵

In the seminarian of those days is to be found the prudence and judgment of the mature man and bishop. Already he had arrived at a conclusion concerning anti-Catholic activities that was to carry him through the dangerous days of Native-Americanism and Know-Nothingism. News came of the Montgomery Guards affair; it stirred him to the very depths with wrath-

¹⁵ John B. Fitzpatrick to Eleanor Fitzpatrick, Oct. 10, 1838 (*Boland Collection*); *Memoranda*, Nov. 7, 1846.

ful indignation, and, in a letter to his sister, he poured out a veritable storm of bitter denunciation upon "the base spirit of New Englanders."

But, despite his emotion, he saw that such outbreaks would never stop the progress of the Church, and in days of inflamed spirits the wisest policy for Catholics was to avoid acts of reprisal:

But this effort will be of no avail; they will never stop the progress of truth in America. I hope our people will not suffer their patience to be wearied out, but will continue to endure with the same forbearance all the insults of their enemies which, I have no doubt, will not cease here. It would be madness for them to attempt anything like retaliation by force; they might prevail at first and make their persecutors pay dear: but they would soon be overpowered by hordes of these country clowns who would be glad of the opportunity to glut their bitter hatred and detestation of us. Let me know when you write again what has been the result of the "unanimous cry of public indignation" which was sent forth on the occasion. I suppose it was like the one which the destruction of the convent elicited — a mere show and nothing else! ¹⁶

While he was at Saint-Sulpice the Bishop began to entrust him with various charges and to place that confidence in him which characterized their relationship when he returned to Boston. He looked after the welfare of the other seminarians who had arrived from home, such as George Goodwin and Nicholas O'Brien, and was also studying the character and abilities of young Frenchmen who might be suitable for the work of the Boston Diocese.¹⁷ He assumed the duty, too, of caring for the financial interests of the Bishop, and was quick to warn him, since he was somewhat careless in his contacts with the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, that he must not be hesitant in keeping his Diocese before the attention of those in charge of the Society if he wished to be a recipient of their sorely needed aid.¹⁸

¹⁶ John B. Fitzpatrick to Eleanor Fitzpatrick, Jan. 12, 1838 (*Boland Collection*).

¹⁷ John B. Fitzpatrick to Bishop Fenwick, March 17, 1840 (*Cartwright Collection, Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

¹⁸ John B. Fitzpatrick to Bishop Fenwick, March 17, 1840 (*Cartwright Collection, Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

On Trinity Sunday, June 13, 1840, the long years of preparation came to an end. John Fitzpatrick, now a deacon, stood before the altar in the Church of Saint-Sulpice and received from Archbishop Pierre Dominique Marcellus Bonamie, Superior of the Picpussiens, his ordination to the priesthood.

III

On returning to Boston, Father Fitzpatrick was first assigned to the Cathedral, where he was soon immersed in a long succession of priestly duties: consultations in the office, visits to the sick, instruction of converts, preaching, and catechism classes. For most of the people it was a pleasure to have him amongst them. Many had seen him grow up and looked on him as their own, a product of their community, who had shown himself capable of fine achievement amongst his Yankee companions at school, and was now an example of all that was best in Catholic education and training. A few, however, cast a critical and questioning eye on him, the group that gave Bishop Fenwick so much unhappiness, people who naturally would be suspicious of a priest who was so close to the Bishop. Their attitude embarrassed the young man, and he found it necessary to proceed cautiously, waiting patiently for the situation to adjust itself.

Late in February, 1841, Bishop Fenwick assigned him to accompany Count de Forbin-Janson, the Bishop of Nancy, France, to New York, to assist him while the Bishop preached a series of sermons to the French residents in that city. This was a work that the prelate had been engaged in for about a year; he had already given about five hundred discourses in various dioceses, and had finally undertaken this apostolate to the New York French, many of whom were "indifferent to their religion."¹⁹ It was the young priest's duty to organize a choir and assist in hearing confessions. Father Fitzpatrick also

¹⁹ John Gilmary Shea, *A History of the Catholic Church within the Limits of the United States from the First Attempted Colonization to the Present Time* (New York, 1892), IV, 117; Father Fitzpatrick to Eleanor Fitzpatrick, March 4, 1841 (*Boland Collection*).

found it an escape from preaching a St. Patrick's Day sermon — something he was reluctant to do, not because he was any less fervent in his devotion to the Saint or the country of his ancestors, but because he was opposed to extravagant demonstrations of nationalism, and as he half-humorously and half-seriously wrote to his sister:

This little jaunt to New York gets my neck out of a very disagreeable noose which I was much afraid of, the Patrick's day sermon: if I had not worn a shamrock as big as my two fists (and I hate such national manifestations) my usefulness might be impaired at least with regard to many of the congregation. Next year, if I am still in Boston, the newness will have worn off from me & folks will be less on the "qui vive." ²⁰

Father Fitzpatrick's next assignment was a surprising one. On February 11, 1842, at the height of the troubles in St. Mary's Church, Boston, he was made co-pastor of that faction-ridden and turbulent congregation. Rash as such an appointment might seem, in view of his youth and inexperience, it was a strong expression of his Bishop's confidence in his prudence and firmness. And, in fact, the experiment succeeded admirably. After a few weeks Dr. O'Flaherty, about whom the battle had chiefly centred, could be sent away, leaving Father Fitzpatrick as sole pastor, with Father Flood, called in from Portland, as his assistant. By the latter part of the year the parish had been so well restored to quiet that Father Fitzpatrick could turn it over to Father Flood in order to assume another difficult commission. Not later than October 9, 1842, Father Fitzpatrick was sent to Cambridge, where a certain amount of quarreling was going on,²¹ to build St. John's Church.

The mission to New York, the assignment to St. Mary's, and the pastorate of Cambridge, where he had charge of one of the finest churches in the Diocese, are all indications of the favorable opinion that Bishop Fenwick had of his protégé. More and more responsibilities were placed upon him; he became a confidant of the Bishop, and acquired an intimate knowledge

²⁰ Father Fitzpatrick to Eleanor Fitzpatrick, March 4, 1841 (*Boland Collection*).

²¹ *Pilot*, Jan. 29, 1848.

of the problems of diocesan administration. During the construction of Holy Cross College, the young pastor was frequently with Bishop Fenwick on his visits to the site; when there was trouble in the parish at Providence, Father Fitzpatrick was sent as Bishop Fenwick's representative to assist in settling it.²² There were many other indications, also, that showed the shrewd old Bishop was thoroughly studying and testing the younger man's character. Finally he decided that he could place on him a most serious responsibility, an office he had desired to have created for some time. John Fitzpatrick, whom he had guided as a boy, and for whose entrance into the priesthood he was morally, and to a large extent financially, responsible, would be his Coadjutor and successor in the Boston Diocese.

At the Fifth Provincial Council of Baltimore the proposal was approved by the assembled bishops, and their recommendation was sent to Rome, where, after some hesitation because of his youthfulness, he was appointed to the office. News of the designation was made public on November 13, 1843. The Bull containing the decree was in Bishop Fenwick's hands by February 13, 1844, and the Bishop in grand humor wrote to Father Fitzpatrick with a jesting allusion to his Titular See:

Rt. Rev. Sir:

I find by the Bull just received and which Mr. O'Brien will hand to you, that you are appointed Bishop of Calliopolis, wherever that may be — I had hopes that you would have been appointed for Boston. But as it is you will pack up your duds and be off as soon as practicable to your Diocese.²³

Father John Fitzpatrick was to have been consecrated a bishop by Archbishop Eccleston, but other duties interfered, and Bishop Fenwick assumed the rôle of consecrator.²⁴ The ceremony took place in the Chapel of the Visitation Nuns at Georgetown, Maryland, on March 24, 1844. Bishop Fenwick

²² *Memoranda*, Oct. 24, 1843.

²³ Bishop Fenwick to Bishop-elect Fitzpatrick, Feb. 13, 1844 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

²⁴ *Memoranda*, March 16, 24, 1844.

was assisted by Bishop Whelan, of Richmond, Virginia, and Bishop Tyler, of Hartford, Connecticut. A number of the Jesuits from Georgetown College were present, together with the nuns of the convent and their young students, and a few laymen.

Seven days later, on Palm Sunday, March 31st, the first Coadjutor Bishop of Boston made his appearance in Holy Cross Cathedral, and celebrated a solemn pontifical Mass assisted by Fathers Hardy and Lyndon.²⁵ It was an occasion that was made more memorable by the presence of Bishops Fenwick and Tyler, the first time that three bishops had appeared together in the sanctuary of the Cathedral.

The episcopacy brought more burdens and responsibilities. Now Bishop Fitzpatrick was back in Boston, living beneath the shadow of the Cathedral, occupied with the multitudinous activities of that busy parish. Bishop Fenwick did not relinquish his direction of affairs, but much of the actual work was handed over to his Coadjutor. The Cathedral parish never had a sufficient number of priests to take care of all demands easily and without strain, and this made it necessary for even a bishop to do things that under ordinary circumstances would have been rightly left to the curates. If a man was taken ill or was forced to rest because of overwork, then his associates had to assume his share. Vacancies in other parishes meant increased obligations, because one of the Cathedral clergy would have to take the place of the absent priest. Sick calls might come from Maine, New Hampshire, or Vermont. Bishop Fitzpatrick gave Bishop Purcell a humorous description of the difficulties encountered in carrying out even the Cathedral ceremonies:

I did not get sight of your letter until Thursday last. Since then I have had no time to breathe, but have been engaged in all sorts of clerical functions from those of the portership to those of the Episcopacy; we perform all the ceremonies in our Cathedral and we are so few in number each one has to exhibit his capabilities good or bad in every grade of orders: I mean of course that there are limits at the upper end and to

²⁵ *Ibid.*, March 31, 1844.

suit the circumstances of persons, for we never allow any one to say Mass or hear confessions except he be a priest duly ordained: as for the rest the distribution [is] a little promiscuous.²⁶

Bishop Fitzpatrick now administered the Sacrament of Confirmation almost exclusively, and made the episcopal visitations to Maine and Vermont. Investigations into parish affairs were conducted by him. Week after week he appeared in the Cathedral to preach hour-long sermons. During the months of 1846 preceding Bishop Fenwick's death, Bishop Fitzpatrick was constantly at his side, except for a few days in May when the Coadjutor was substituting for his Bishop at the Sixth Provincial Council of Baltimore.

And then the hour came when Bishop Fenwick, who had for so many years carefully kept a day-by-day account of events in the Diocese, could no longer lift a pen. That happened on August 7, 1846. Bishop Fitzpatrick now took up the duty, and filled the pages of the *Memoranda* with anxious notes about Bishop Fenwick's condition until that sad morning of August 11th, when his beloved friend and spiritual father died in his arms.

One of the glories of the Catholic Church is its unfaltering progress through the centuries. Men appear upon the ever-moving stream of its history, do their work, suffer the infirmities of human nature, and die — but the Church goes on. Popes successively occupy the Chair of Saint Peter. Bishop after bishop follows the course to which inevitably must be written *Finis*. Priests spend their years, and others come to occupy their places. But the Church knows no end in death. No matter who the man may be, his passing does not bring dissolution. On earth she will go on until the sands of time no longer trickle down from hour to hour. There always will be successors of the Apostles. So the mantle of authority passed from the dead to the living: John Fitzpatrick was now the Bishop of Boston. Diocesan life went on.

²⁶ Bishop Fitzpatrick to Bishop Purcell, April 8, 1844 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

IV

Of all the men who had guided the destinies of the Boston Diocese up to this time, John Fitzpatrick was the most gifted. Tall and well-proportioned, graceful in all that he did, he had been endowed with a magnificent physique that immediately commanded attention. He was "venerable and dignified in his appearance," of "calm and devotional mien" as he performed his episcopal functions. All who have written of him have remarked the nobility of his face and the "finely developed brow" that "was but a truthful index of the mind within." For years he and Daniel Webster, amongst all men of Boston, were considered to make the most striking appearance.²⁷ Refined and cultured in his tastes, deeply versed in theology, he had acquired, during his years of study abroad, a familiarity with a variety of subjects that gave him a well-balanced mind; but he was not ponderous, for he possessed a sparkling wit and a famous humor that broke through and enlivened the most serious conversations. Nor was he lacking in accomplishments in the arts. He was familiar with good music, was an excellent singer, and in lighter moments of recreation could be persuaded to entertain his friends with a wide repertory of songs. This interest was reflected in his attention to the Cathedral choir, his efforts to provide the best in Church music, and the appreciative or caustic comments he confided to his *Memoranda* concerning various Catholic musical organizations that appeared before him. As an orator he was "eloquent and accomplished,"²⁸ and soon after beginning his priestly career in Boston he became a preacher of note, attracting not only Catholics but numerous Protestants to hear him. He had a melodious voice, rich in feeling and expression, which he used to its fullest extent in preaching the Word of God. In his sermons he was not a mere stylist, but always had an objective in view, the instruction or admonition of his people, and he brought every power he possessed into use in order that it might be

²⁷ *Pilot*, Feb. 13, 1866.

²⁸ Rev. John Pierce, *Memoirs*, Aug., 1846.

achieved. He wrote as well as he talked. From his pen flowed a prose rich in thought, expression, and imagery, French in its clearness, logic, and precision, and altogether free from the stilted or turgid mannerisms of the day. Ordinarily urbane and irenic, his tone could become sharp and incisive if it was necessary to go straight to the heart of a problem or to expose deceit and sophistry. Probably he had the most outstanding talent for writing among all the American bishops of that time. It is a matter for regret, therefore, that he did not leave a larger literary heritage, or one that would more fully exhibit his powers than do the letters and pastorals which form most of what remains from his pen. This was prevented by the labors of his early years in the episcopate and by the tragic illness of the years after 1856. His appeal to the people of the Diocese to give generously to the Irish Famine Fund was a moving, but restrained, document, vivid in its picturing of the sufferings of the victims, commanding in its positive instructions as to what constituted the duty of a Catholic to the sufferers, convincing in its assumption that not a single member of the various congregations would neglect his call. When he raised a protest against forcing children to read the Protestant version of the Bible in the public schools, then his pen was rapier-like, fencing skillfully, flashing here, scoring there, not aggressive but fearless, courteous but unflinching. In a day when bishops had to make many a formal declaration against anti-Catholicism, no bishop produced a stronger document; nor did Father Haskins exaggerate when he said: "This communication is one of the most masterly, able, and convincing documents to be found in our language."²⁹

His was a vigorous Catholicism, uncompromising in its insistence that he was in the possession of the truth. Hence his positive detestation of what he considered the errors of Protestantism, which he denounced outspokenly on many an occasion. "A bold man against the heretic," his colleague of Louisville half-playfully called him.³⁰ But he could distinguish be-

²⁹ Father Haskins, *A Panegyric*, p. 37.

³⁰ J. L. Spalding, S.T.L., *The Life of the Most Rev. M. J. Spalding, D.D.* (New York, 1873), p. 153.

tween Protestantism and its professors, and while castigating the former, he was tolerant and friendly enough towards the latter, convinced that they held their beliefs in good faith. For this reason, and also because he felt that they should be enlightened as to the Church's doctrines, he did not, like Bishop Fenwick, avoid association with non-Catholics. As a result, he became known and was welcomed into the more prominent social circles of Boston. His accomplishments would naturally cause a certain gravitation in this direction, for here were to be found the Bostonian intellectuals of those days. Likewise, his leadership of a vast group in Boston, in whose welfare many of these people were genuinely interested, would create certain philanthropic ties, whilst the friendships that were established with the children of these families at Boston Latin School certainly must in many instances have continued on into adult life. Of these latter, one very dear companionship was that which grew up between young Fitzpatrick and George Cabot, son of the "Federalist Sage." This brought him into contact with the Cabot family, and with John Ellerton Lodge, to whose son, Henry Cabot Lodge, he was "the best of companions, genial, affectionate, and sympathetic."³¹ Amongst other friends were Charles Sumner, Rufus Choate, Nathaniel Bowditch, President Felton of Harvard, Parkman, the historian, Dr. John C. Warren, Abbott Lawrence, the Metcalfs, the Lyman, and Robert C. Winthrop. At the outset of his career as Bishop of Boston, he was invited to join one of the most outstanding groups in the city, the Thursday Evening Club, as one of its first members.³² In this company he met such men as F. C. Gray, Theophilus Parsons, Edward Everett, Martin Brimmer, George Darracott, Dr. C. T. Jackson, Oliver Wendell Holmes, William Appleton, George B. Emerson. A man of less sturdy character would have been flattered by the invitation which Dr. Warren personally brought to him,³³ but not Bishop Fitzpatrick, who was at first inclined to look upon it as a "crotchet,"

³¹ Edward Warren, M.D., *The Life of John Collins Warren, M.D.* (Boston, n.d.), I, 371.

³² Henry Cabot Lodge, *Early Memories*, p. 56.

³³ *Ibid.*; *Memoranda*, Oct. 30, 1846.

and was persuaded to join only after long deliberation.³⁴ The Club did become a source of pleasure and entertainment for him. He saw demonstrations of such curiosities (to a person of his day) as guncotton, the administration of chloroform, the manufacture of gas, and electric fire alarms. He listened to discussions of various scientific topics. Yet, when the Club undertook activities that were at variance with his principles, he did not hesitate to refrain from participation. A testimonial to Professor Agassiz, commending a course of lectures given by him on Natural History and Theology, lacked his signature because of certain statements made by Agassiz concerning the origin of the human race.³⁵

What was the Bishop's outstanding virtue? Undoubtedly, it was charity. He was a man who tried to understand and put into action the greatest commandment of all, to love God and love one's neighbor. He hated cheap, petty gossip, and the character-destroying tales of selfish, jealous, or moronic minds. If anyone did come into his presence with the hope of retailing scandal and idle talk, he was soon frozen into a painful silence. One of the strongest denunciations that Bishop Fitzpatrick ever wrote was in condemnation of clerical tattle.³⁶ His charity was of the broadest kind. He sought to find in everyone some good. He tried to express the spirit of Christianity in the various charitable works undertaken by him. As a bishop he did not give up his priestly work, and could be found visiting the sick, attending to the poor in the cholera hospitals, and working for the relief of the sufferers from ship fever in the immigrant hospitals. To a priest whose activities had almost caused a schism, he wrote:

. . . it may be after all that my leniency which I had begun to repent of as a fault and a sin for which I would have to answer to God will turn out to have been for the best. The Apostle says to us: "Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil by good." I think that I have tried to follow this advice and

³⁴ *Memoranda, loc. cit.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*, Feb. 4, 1847.

³⁶ Bishop Fitzpatrick to Archbishop Hughes, Sept. 20, 1859 (*New York Dioc. Arch.*, A 11).

especially with my priests. For I felt that the souls of my priests ought to be for me an object not of less but of greater care and tenderness than those of the people. If an unfortunate and erring priest be cast away by his Bishop to whom can he go? He has no adviser left but the devil and bad men who would drive him still deeper into crimes.

When you reflect upon the occurrences of the last eight years you cannot but feel in my conduct toward you I have been governed by these principles, actuated by these motives. If, at long last, I succeed, as I now begin confidently to hope that I shall do, in putting you back into the right path and saving your soul from perdition, I shall be satisfied. I know the judgments that are pronounced, the censures that are passed, upon my mode of government, in and out of the Diocese. You know them too. But these are things of small moment, if at the judgment of God it shall appear that without the sacrifice of any principles or any duty, I have saved the souls of some few priests from hell by mercy and forbearance, and exhortation and entreaty, I am willing to run the risk of blame here.³⁷

A final word in this description of the Bishop — the quality of any man in his position may well be measured by the attitude of the people towards him. The *Boston Evening Transcript*, on the occasion of his first appearance in the Cathedral after his return from a visit to Rome, said:

It is quite evident that Bishop Fitzpatrick has the confidence and respect of the people of his charge to a degree rarely attained in this country.³⁸

An even better clue is found in the title that everyone, Protestant and Catholic, gave him, a title of love and respect, a title impregnated with a sense of the fatherly relationship that exists between a bishop and his flock. All Boston knew him, not as Bishop Fitzpatrick, but, with excusable informality, as "Bishop John."³⁹

³⁷ Bishop Fitzpatrick to a priest of the Diocese, April 29, 1853 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*). My quotation is taken from the first draft of the letter.

³⁸ Aug. 21, 1854.

³⁹ Henry Cabot Lodge, *Early Memories*, p. 56; Georgina Pell Curtis, *Some Roads to Rome in America* (St. Louis, and Freiburg, 1909), p. 73.

CHAPTER II

DIOCESAN ADMINISTRATION AND ACTIVITIES

I

WHEN JOHN FITZPATRICK took possession of the episcopal throne in Holy Cross Cathedral on Sunday, August 16, 1846, he could have had little idea of the many changes that were to take place in the Diocese of Boston during his lifetime. In the ordinary course of events there would be a moderate development in the number of churches and parishes, but he could not foresee that within a few months an extraordinary multiplication and division would begin; that this would be repeated time and again; that there would be a tremendous increase in the number of Catholic people; that from one Diocese three would be created; and that the Diocese of Boston, confined to one State, would have four times as many churches as it had when spread over four States. And all this to happen within twenty years.

The new Bishop's close association with his predecessor and his varied experiences as a priest and Coadjutor gave him a background upon which to base the policies he was to follow in his administration of the Diocese. Naturally enough, these were similar in many ways to those of his beloved friend and mentor, who had had the opportunity and wisdom to set down the bases upon which the administration of the Diocese was to be founded, although in all cases the course affairs were to take would force modifications and developments. And, moreover, what previously had only been talked about would actually be accomplished by Bishop Fitzpatrick. Briefly, the new Bishop's policies were as follows. He aimed, in the first place, to put an end to lay control of church property and influence in ecclesiastical affairs, and he accomplished his purpose, although it meant several unpleasant experiences with disputes that had come to him from the Fenwick era. Then there was the obli-

gation of providing Sunday schools for the religious education of the children, a necessity that clamored for attention when the tide of immigration reached flood levels. Nor could Catholic schools be overlooked. Parochial schools were established, and higher education was fostered both by supporting and re-founding Holy Cross College and by starting Boston College. Charitable institutions had to be organized. A sound financial policy had to be enforced, and this he found in the principle that it was best to erect only plain substantial churches that would not place too much strain on the people's purses. He never fully attained this ideal, for various means were devised to circumvent him, but, in the main, his Diocese was placed on a firm foundation, and Bishop Fitzpatrick acquired a good reputation among his Yankee neighbors as a financier. The establishment of national churches for those who did not understand English was imperative. Father Zéphérine Lévêque was accepted into the Diocese to work among the Canadians of Worcester; other priests gradually were added to the clergy to help in this work, and the Jesuits agreed to aid the Bishop by supplying members of their Society who had been expelled from various countries in Europe.¹ Bishop Fitzpatrick put an end to the troubles at the German Church of the Holy Trinity, Boston, and placed a satisfactory priest in charge. The small number of Italians living in Boston were not neglected; Father Finotti conducted a mission for them, and there was a proposal to begin a catechetical school for the children. The Bishop did not forget the spiritual needs of the people, and retreats and missions became more and more frequent. Various religious societies, such as the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin, were established. Finally, the Jesuits were induced to assume again the care of their ancient missions among the Maine Indians.

II

One of the most arduous duties Bishop Fitzpatrick had to fulfill was his visitations throughout the Diocese. The far-flung

¹ *Memoranda*, June 9, 1848.

parishes made it necessary to spend many days touring from one to another. Of routine character and uninteresting these visits may seem, though they show an unflagging devotion to duty; but there was much of the flavor of pioneer days in his travels to the scattered congregations of Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont. He might have to journey almost ninety miles from one point to another in a ramshackle coach over abominable backwoods roads, or go from town to town in a canoe. Nightfall sometimes found him on a dangerous highway behind a pair of miserably slow horses, whose lagging pace left him in the midst of a thick fog. A visit to Bangor brought him to St. Michael's rectory just as the pastor, Father O'Sullivan, was about to collapse with exhaustion from attending the dying during a cholera plague. The Bishop with his companions had to relieve him. In a country village where there was no church the faithful would be assembled in someone's house, or, if that was too small, in the back yard; the Bishop preaching from the back steps, and then administering Confirmation to the candidates, who knelt on the ground. Sometimes, when there was no suitable meeting-place in the town, he led the flock to some clearing in the woods, and there, surrounded by towering trees, with the altar set in a natural bay and a trunk for a pulpit, he would hold services.

The Bishop made five trips to Maine, the longest and most arduous of which took place during the summer of 1847. He made a tremendous sweep through the northern section up to the parish of St. Luce and the Canadian border. Then he started back and, after many stops, arrived at Eastport. From here he journeyed to a number of towns in the vicinity, such as Machias, Prescott, and Lubec. This visitation lasted almost two months, beginning on July 23rd and ending on September 10th. He made two long visits to Vermont, while New Hampshire received only one call, and that was to Manchester.

III

They jest want this Californy
 So's to lug new slave states in
 To abuse ye, an' to scorn ye,
 An' to plunder ye like sin.²

A humorous bit of verse, to be sure, but only in its manner of expressing a belief that was fermenting and seething in the minds of many a New Englander. Slavery was fast becoming the dominant issue in the country. James Russell Lowell was stating a New Englander's opposition to the Mexican War, and the acquisition of territory into which the "peculiar institution" of the South might spread. And of all the New England States, Massachusetts was especially set against the conflict. So true was this that, when a call was issued by the Federal Government for troops, there was much discussion as to whether or not to send it to the Bay State, since the officials were very doubtful as to what the response would be.³ And, in fact, although troops were sent from Massachusetts, the General Court, under the influence of Charles Sumner, throughout the course of the war passed fiery resolutions against its continuance.⁴

It would be interesting to know what Bishop Fitzpatrick's views were, especially since he was a close friend of both those rivals on the State political scene, Sumner and Robert C. Winthrop. But, unfortunately, not even his *Memoranda* ever received any indication of his opinion. Nor did the *Catholic Observer*, whose editor was close to the Bishop, ever express a judgment which might be construed as reflecting official policy. In fact, the only time this paper broke away from a mere reporting of events was when the official organ of the Polk Administration, the *Washington Union*, ventured to suggest that Mexican church property should be sequestered. Then, as did

² James Russell Lowell, *The Biglow Papers* (Boston, 1886), p. 56.

³ Justin H. Smith, *The War with Mexico* (New York, 1919), I, 537, note 3.

⁴ *Ibid.*, II, 274.

all Catholic papers, it sharply protested. The *Union* quickly brought down its trial balloon, explaining that it had no official standing.⁵

The Pilot, however, was decidedly in favor of the Mexican War. When the General Court showed its unwillingness to appropriate twenty thousand dollars for equipping a regiment organized by Caleb Cushing, then *The Pilot* swung its guns towards Beacon Hill and fired a broadside. The legislators were tight-fisted. They claimed to be concerned with the injustice of the war, but, actually, they were more affected by the painful process of taking money from the treasury. "The twenty thousand dollars is much harder to part with than the honor and gallantry of the State," cried *The Pilot*.⁶ Emphatically, said the writer, the solons are also wrong about the justice of the conflict. It is not "a conquest of territory or people," but "a conquest of peace." The troops are going to Mexico "on a sacred mission." The United States did not seek the war. Mexico was the aggressor. Neither Polk nor his party had ulterior motives. Why are the legislators not honest? Why not admit their jealousy? They are afraid of gains the Administration will make if the Army is triumphant. They are willing to sacrifice the State's honor "to their unfounded and ingenious prejudices."⁷

A great number of Catholic Irishmen enlisted in the Massachusetts Regiment.⁸ Company B, led by Captain Barry, was entirely Irish and was frequently seen at church on Sunday attending Mass or Vespers.⁹

The Catholic soldiers at the forts in the harbor were not neglected, for Father O'Brien of St. Nicholas' Church, East Boston, had these places under his charge and visited them frequently. Just before they left for Mexico, Father O'Brien went on board their transport and said Mass for them.¹⁰

⁵ *Catholic Observer*, May 29, 1847; Sister Blanche Marie McEniry, *American Catholics in the War with Mexico* (Washington, D.C., 1937, Cath. Univ. doct. diss.), pp. 16, 17.

⁶ Jan. 30, 1847.

⁷ *Pilot*, loc. cit.; see also the issue for Feb. 13, 1847.

⁸ *Memoranda*, Feb. 21, 1847.

⁹ *Catholic Observer*, Jan. 16, 23, 1847; *Pilot*, Jan. 23, 30, 1847.

¹⁰ *Memoranda*, loc. cit.

The Bishop displayed a great deal of interest in the troops. It was he who arranged for Father O'Brien to go to the forts and say Mass aboard the transport. He also gave an instruction to Company B one Sunday in the Cathedral, emphasizing the desirability of knowing how to make an act of perfect contrition in case anyone was mortally wounded on the battlefield and could not receive the last Sacraments from a priest.¹¹

IV

Bishop Fitzpatrick, in dealing with trustees and lay control of church property, adopted an absolutely positive stand, and would neither allow the system to continue in old parishes nor be started in new foundations. All parochial property had to be deeded to the Bishop of Boston. Not that he assumed a dictatorial tone or attempted precipitate changes — he was far too diplomatic for that; but he was quietly persistent, and, over a period of years, attained his end. Yet, despite all his caution, he had several sad experiences with situations that led to lawsuits, financial disaster to a congregation, or the danger of schism.

The dispute over the Waltham church property that had begun under Bishop Fenwick reached its climax shortly after Bishop Fitzpatrick took charge of the Diocese. The Bishop was fully cognizant of the facts in the case, since he had gone to Waltham to inquire into it. A few weeks before Bishop Fenwick's death, Father Strain's adherents, and even a few of the opposition, had asked Bishop Fitzpatrick's permission to have the church reopened, although the opposition still insisted that Father Strain be removed. But Bishop Fitzpatrick refused to consent unless the congregation by court action should secure the Bishop of Boston in complete control.¹² He also denied a request of the Strain faction that they should be authorized to secure the services of a sheriff to force an entrance. But, unfortunately, they insisted on having their own way. The advice of Ephraim Buttrick, a Cambridge lawyer, was sought. He

¹¹ *Pilot*, Jan. 23, 1847.

¹² *Memoranda*, Aug. 19, 1846.

told them they could forcibly occupy the church, and they decided to ignore the Bishop's orders.¹³

The result was that on Sunday, August 16, 1846, an entrance was forced into St. Mary's Church by Father Strain and his group, together with Lawyer Buttrick and Adolphus Smith, a deputy sheriff. There was a tremendous commotion. The churchyard gate and the church door were hammered open, blows were exchanged, and there was any amount of wild talk and threats. And, of course, Michael Rogers, Father Strain's old antagonist, was in the centre of the entire disturbance; if he had only stayed away, there would have been no riot. The town authorities, made aware of what was in prospect by many rumors, were prepared. When they received word of the *mêlée*, warning cannons were fired and the Artillery Company assembled. But the lawyer, a sort of queasy character, evidently began to have doubts as to the wisdom of his advice and suddenly felt a desire to be in any place but the church. He urged Father Strain to leave, and the victors retired from the sorry scene without the spoils of victory.¹⁴

But the affair did not end there. A complaint was lodged with the civil authorities and the Commonwealth started a court action against Father Strain, Lawyer Buttrick, Deputy Smith, and five others for inciting a riot.¹⁵ Buttrick, well aware of the anti-Catholic bias of juries in those days, sought, and was granted, a separate trial.¹⁶ Smith and Felix Dolan defaulted. The trial was held before the Court of Common Pleas of Lowell in October, 1846; the defendants were found guilty, were sentenced to various fines, and asked, and were granted, a continuance of the case.¹⁷

At the same time the Bishop, incensed at the actions of the

¹³ There is no evidence to show that they ever obtained any court authorization, although they did secure the services of a deputy sheriff.

¹⁴ The sources for this incident are to be found in *Memoranda*, Aug. 19, Oct. 2, Nov. 9, 1846; Nov. 7, 1847; *Lowell Daily Courier*, Oct. 29, 30, Nov. 3, 5, 1846.

¹⁵ *Records of the Court of Common Pleas, Commonwealth vs. James Strain et al., Oct., 1846 (Middlesex Co. Records).*

¹⁶ *Memoranda*, Nov. 9, 1846.

¹⁷ *Records of the Court of Common Pleas, Commonwealth vs. James Strain et al., Oct., 1846 (Middlesex Co. Records).*

Waltham Committee, called in Lawyers Walsh and Ryan and authorized them to prosecute the suit begun by Bishop Fenwick.¹⁸ A jury returned a verdict against the obstructionists, and they asked for a continuance of the case.¹⁹

Affairs went along in this state for some months with neither case definitely settled. Father Strain in the meantime abandoned Waltham for a residence in Watertown. But the Bishop was only waiting for an opportunity to remove the pastor, and finally, in January, 1847, sent him to St. Mary's, Boston, while Father Patrick Flood came to take his place at Watertown. The new pastor was evidently able to pacify at least some of the Waltham people, and in June, 1847, he began to say Mass in the Town Hall.²⁰ This had a good effect and on November 7, 1847, some of the more prominent Catholics of Waltham called on the Bishop, apologized for the annoyances that had been given, and promised to have the suit against Father Strain and his co-defendants withdrawn if the Bishop would consent to the reopening of the church.²¹ The Bishop agreed on these conditions, and services were again started in St. Mary's on November 21, 1847.²² Probably some of the other members of the congregation were not too enthusiastic about this, for the suit was not stopped until June, 1848.²³

More unpleasant events, however, were ahead. On June 4, 1848, an incendiary fired the church, which was completely destroyed.²⁴ While there is no evidence as to who the incendiary was, it is not improbable that he belonged to the anti-Strain faction. Thoroughly annoyed by this latest outrage, the selectmen offered a reward for the apprehension of the culprit, and at the same time told the pastor that he could use the Town Hall free of charge. The Unitarian Society also acted in a very kind and sympathetic manner.²⁵ Although it is usu-

¹⁸ *Memoranda*, Oct. 2, 1846.

¹⁹ *Records of the Supreme Judicial Court*, Oct., 1846 (*Middlesex Co. Records*).

²⁰ *Pilot*, Nov. 27, 1847.

²¹ *Memoranda*, Nov. 7, 1848.

²² *Pilot*, Nov. 27, 1847.

²³ *Records of the Court of Common Pleas*, June, 1848 (*Middlesex Co. Records*).

²⁴ *Catholic Observer*, June 7, 1848. It may be that this wanton act awoke some members of the congregation who were still in rebellion to realization of their position and was the clinching argument in favor of withdrawing the suit.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

ally stated that Mass was celebrated in the Town Hall, the fact is that services were given up altogether for a time.²⁶ The congregation finally rebuilt the church, which was opened around June, 1849.²⁷

No sooner was this done than a new dispute broke out about the collection of pew rents and the pastor's salary. At least two letters were drawn up asking that a new pastor be appointed.²⁸ It would seem, however, that this dispute was soon settled. It is not clear how this was accomplished. It may be that Father Flood was able to reach a satisfactory agreement with the people. Or it is possible that the case came to the Bishop and he flatly refused to remove the pastor, reminding the malcontents that he had already beaten them once in court and could probably do so a second time. Having made them see this, it is possible that he agreed to withdraw his suit, provided they would accept Father Flood. Whatever did happen, this much is certain: the Bishop's case was nol-prossed in October, 1849, owing to the failure of either party to appear.²⁹ Father Flood remained as pastor, and Waltham affairs thereafter went on peacefully. It was not until May 1, 1853, however, that the church property was finally deeded unconditionally to the Bishop.³⁰

In South Boston trouble had been brewing for some time. Father Fitzsimmons, the pastor, had labored greatly for the up-building of SS. Peter and Paul's parish and its extensive missions and had established himself deeply in the affections of the people. But, at the same time, by extremely costly building operations he had brought financial affairs into a morass of confusion and had been guilty of such serious misconduct that the

²⁶ This statement is based on a petition to the Bishop which states that Mass was not held in the town after the church was burned until a new church was built.

²⁷ The writer is responsible for this date: it is based on a letter written by the Waltham Catholics described in the succeeding paragraph.

²⁸ The Catholics of Waltham to the Rt. Rev. Bishop Fitzpatrick, July 9, 1849 (from papers in the possession of the Roche family of Waltham); Waltham Catholic Society to the Rt. Rev. Dr. Fitzpatrick, no date (*Roche family papers*).

²⁹ *Records of the Supreme Judicial Court*, Oct., 1849 (*Middlesex Co. Records*).

³⁰ *Resolves*, chapter 38, 1853 (*Mass. State Arch.*).

Bishop was forced to remove him. The deposition of such a popular pastor provoked an outburst of indignation, which for a moment almost threatened a schism.³¹ So serious, indeed, did it become that the Bishop dared not leave the Diocese to make a journey he had planned. On Sunday, April 17, 1853, Father Lyndon, who had been assigned to take Father Fitzsimmons' place, was denounced by a group of parishioners during Mass and a demand was made for the return of the former pastor.³² Fortunately, saner minds prevailed and no outrage took place in what was then the most bigoted and anti-Catholic section of Boston.³³ Nevertheless, the Catholic community fairly seethed with excitement. Presently some of the bolder spirits organized a committee and proceeded to call on the Bishop to demand an explanation. Bishop Fitzpatrick was in an awkward position, for it was difficult to disarm the indignation of the committee without fully revealing the grounds for the removal of their pastor, and this he did not feel able to do. Nevertheless, by adroit diplomacy he succeeded not only in convincing his visitors that he had acted justly, but also in obtaining from them a promise to stop all further agitation.³⁴

At Worcester an attempt was made by certain laborers engaged in railroad construction to dictate parish policies. In the fall of 1846 a secret organization, headed by one O'Hearne, proceeded to engage in terroristic activities, and, because most of the members were Catholics, Father Gibson, the pastor, felt it his duty to stop their rowdyism. He made a quiet investigation, and having discovered their leader, denounced him one Sunday during Mass. That put an end to this particular society.

Soon, however, another organization was being started, and in the spring of 1847 the Shamrock Benevolent Society appeared. This group should not be confused with another

³¹ Bishop Fitzpatrick to Bishop McCloskey, April 25, 1853 (*New York Dioc. Arch.*, A 22); Bishop Fitzpatrick to Father Fitzsimmons, April 29, 1853 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

³² *Memoranda*, April 20, 1853.

³³ For some examples of the anti-Catholic spirit see the *South Boston Gazette*, March 29, April 5, 12, 19, Sept. 6, 1851.

³⁴ *Memoranda*, April 22, 1853.

praiseworthy society of the same name. They caused innumerable fights, and Father Gibson on Easter Sunday threatened to deprive the members of the Sacraments.³⁵ The Shamrocks retaliated by nailing a placard to the door of St. John's Church denouncing the "Saxon tyrant." Father Gibson had to have his house guarded that night by a sheriff and constable. Then they tried to have the pastor removed from Worcester and sent a delegation to the Bishop demanding this. But Bishop Fitzpatrick was well aware of the situation, and when they appeared before him, he denounced them and sent them back to Worcester to apologize to the pastor.

V

The first Provincial Council of Baltimore attended by Bishop Fitzpatrick, as head of the Boston Diocese, was that held in 1849. At this meeting of the bishops he was appointed, together with Bishop Purcell, to write the documents that were to be sent to Rome containing the Council's recommendations for new sees, and the qualifications of the candidates proposed for them.³⁶

It was this Seventh Council of Baltimore that concerned itself with the situation of Pope Pius IX, who had been driven from Rome to Gaeta by the Roman Revolution in 1848. Seeking to relieve his financial distress, the bishops decided to issue a Pastoral letter urging the faithful to contribute to a collection that was to be taken up in all the dioceses. Bishop Fitzpatrick's Pastoral was read in the churches on Sunday, July 1st, and his people replied with unusual generosity. The Cathedral parish gave the second largest sum in its history.³⁷

³⁵ The account of these Worcester societies is drawn from a collection of source material made by Richard O'Flynn, of Worcester, and now in the possession of George B. O'Flynn, of that city.

³⁶ *Memoranda*, under May 2, 1849; Thomas O'Gorman, *A History of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States* (New York, 1895), p. 347.

³⁷ *Memoranda*, July 1, 1849; *Catholic Observer*, July 3, 1849. The sum received in the Cathedral collection was \$492.50. This, together with sums raised in other Boston churches, made the collection amount to \$1,200 (*Pilot*, July 7, 1849). It was substantially increased by donations from other parishes. But it

This collection was not without repercussions. Citizens of the United States had watched with intense interest the struggle between liberalism and monarchism in Europe and were aware of the rising tide in Italy. The various reforms introduced by Pius IX aroused enthusiasm in the United States. But, at length, the Pope became involved in a conflict with radical demagogues who sought exclusively to control him. The uprising of February 8, 1848, forced him to promise further changes, some of which were actually started. But a turning-point came in his policies. The Pope, tormented by reactionaries, became distrustful of the aims of Piedmont and feared a schism with Austria. He, therefore, refused to assume the leadership of an Italian confederacy and wage war on Austria. That destroyed his Italian popularity; the uprising of November 16, 1848, took place, and the Pope was forced to flee to Gaeta. These events caused a reaction in the United States and enthusiasm for the Papacy was snuffed out. In Boston the Pope's Collection was treated with contempt and disparagement by the newspapers, and the Church was accused of aiding an attempt to enslave free men.³⁸

Bishop Fitzpatrick's letter about the collection was an answer to this hostile spirit. After observing that there were many who vainly hoped that the attacks on the Papacy would destroy the Catholic Church, he took pains to state that the requested contributions did not have the slightest political implications. The Pope might or might not be a prince; that did not alter our relations with him as the successor of St. Peter and, therefore, the spiritual head of the Church. His position as Pope made it necessary for him to have constant contact with all Christendom; he must always have large numbers of advisers; he must send ambassadors and legates to all parts of the world. These needs all required expenditures, but the revolution deprived

is impossible to give the final total. Bishop Fitzpatrick at that time was the administrator of the Hartford Diocese, and in mentioning the sum he sent to Rome (\$3,412), he gave the combined contributions of the two dioceses (*Memoranda*, Sept. 28, 1849; *Catholic Observer*, Oct. 4, 1849).

³⁸ *Memoranda*, July 1, 1849; *Boston Evening Transcript*, July 2, 1849; *Boston Daily Courier*, July 2, 3, 1849.

him of the sources from which he formerly drew the necessary funds. "The vindicators of the rights of men have in their zeal forgotten the rights of religion, and appropriated to secular purposes what piety in former ages had devoted to the service of the Church," wrote Bishop Fitzpatrick. Catholics, he said, knew this, and seeking to succor the Vicegerent of Christ made their contributions to the collection.³⁹

Around 1851, Bishop Fitzpatrick began to plan for the ecclesiastical separation of the States of Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont from Massachusetts, and the erection of two new sees, one at Burlington and the other at Portland.⁴⁰ The long journeys that were necessary to visit the faithful living in these States, the impossibility of correctly supervising the various activities, such as church-building, the ever-increasing demands that came from the growing Massachusetts parishes, and, perhaps, the first indications of that malady that was soon to burden his life, all made necessary a contraction of the limits of the Boston Diocese. The steps to effect this were taken at the First Plenary Council of Baltimore.

Some years before a scheme had been concocted by the Abbé Charles Étienne Brasseur de Bourbourg for a division of the Diocese. The Abbé, who later won some small fame for his researches amongst the aborigines of Mexico and Central America, came to Boston from Rome shortly after his ordination in 1845, and then went to Quebec, where he planned, with the aid of several priests whom he had met in Rome, to establish a religious house. But the plan failed, and he returned to Boston to labor for some months in the ministry. During this period he made an extraordinarily fine impression on all who came in contact with him, so much so that when he felt it necessary to return to France because of his health, Bishop Fitzpatrick made him his Vicar-General with a rather vague and minor commission to promote the interests of the Diocese in

³⁹ *Pilot*, July 14, 1849.

⁴⁰ Archbishop Kenrick to Bishop M. J. Spalding, autumn, 1851 or 1852 (Rev. J. L. Spalding, *The Life of the Most Rev. M. J. Spalding, D.D., Archbishop of Baltimore*, pp. 152 f.).

Europe, especially with various missionary societies.⁴¹ Evidently his concept of his position far exceeded anything that Bishop Fitzpatrick had contemplated, with the result that he was credited with more importance in Rome than he really possessed and was taken into consultation by one of the Cardinals.⁴² Soon rumors began to drift back to Boston concerning his meddling in high affairs. These became of sufficient magnitude to cause Bishop Fitzpatrick to write to Cardinal Franconi, warning him that whatever Father Bourbourg "had said of the erection of new Sees and Archdioceses here, there, or elsewhere was exclusively his own invention and suggestion."⁴³ This letter was written on February 12, 1848.⁴⁴ Soon after this, Bishop Fitzpatrick learned from Bishop Purcell of a report that was sent to him by one of his priests, who was traveling in Europe, to the effect that a companion of Father Bourbourg's had stated that the Pope intended to make Father Bourbourg Bishop of a new see that was to be composed of Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont. Burlington or Bangor was to be the episcopal centre. Bishop Purcell's informant also stated that Father Bourbourg, when questioned, denied any knowledge of the plan. In view of a statement later made by Father Bourbourg, however, that he suggested the erection of the Sees of Burlington and Portland, and Bishop Fitzpatrick's description of his Vicar-General's Roman maneuvers, it is clear that he did have at least some knowledge of what was going on.⁴⁵

⁴¹ *Memoranda*, Aug. 17, 1846. Bishop Fitzpatrick to Bishop Purcell, April 16, 1848 (*Notre Dame Arch.*); cf. Father Bourbourg's report to the Association for the Propagation of the Faith, *Annals of the Propagation of the Faith*, VIII, 1847.

⁴² Father Brasseur de Bourbourg to Bishop Fitzpatrick, n.d. (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁴³ Bishop Fitzpatrick to Bishop Purcell, *loc. cit.*

⁴⁴ *Memoranda*, Feb. 12, 1848.

⁴⁵ Rev. W. Levi and Rev. C. Boeswall to Bishop Purcell, Dec. 11, 1847 (*Notre Dame Arch.*); Bishop Fitzpatrick to Bishop Purcell, *loc. cit.* The account of Father Bourbourg's boasting about his part in the creation of the Sees of Portland and Burlington will be found in a diary written by Father Hilary Tucker, who was stationed at the Cathedral. On July 21, 1863, Father Tucker noted that Father Bourbourg made a call at the Cathedral rectory, and during some conversation stated that he had suggested the erection of the Sees of Newark, Burlington, Brooklyn, and Portland, and also the candidates for filling them. Father Tucker did not hear Father Bourbourg say this, but received the story from one of the other priests. The diary is in the Boston Diocese Archives.

The Bishops of the Plenary Council considered the proposal of the new dioceses favorably, and a recommendation was sent to Rome that Maine and New Hampshire should be constituted as one diocese with Portland as the See, while Vermont should become another with its See at Burlington.

At this time the Boston Diocese had ninety-five churches within its limits; an increase of forty-seven in seven years. The division left Boston with sixty-three churches; Portland received twenty-four, and Burlington was allotted eight.

For the Diocese of Burlington, Louis de Goësbriand, Vicar-General of the Cleveland Diocese, and an old schoolmate of Bishop Fitzpatrick, was chosen Bishop. He was consecrated on October 30, 1853, by the Nuncio to Brazil, Archbishop Bedini, in St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York. On November 4th, the new Bishop came to Boston with Bishop Fitzpatrick to make ready to take possession of his See. The next day the two journeyed to Burlington, where they were met by several thousand Catholics headed by Father Mignault, and were escorted to St. Mary's Church. On Sunday (November 6th) Bishop de Goësbriand celebrated a solemn pontifical High Mass, and Bishop Fitzpatrick delivered a sermon on the episcopal character and dignity.⁴⁶

The disposal of the Portland Diocese had a somewhat different history, owing to the refusal of the Very Rev. Henry B. Coskery, of Baltimore, who had been elected to the See, to accept the burden. Bishop Fitzpatrick, therefore, was obliged to carry on the administration until the Rev. David W. Bacon, of the Church of the Assumption in New York, accepted the bishopric. This delay, by the way, gives the historian of the Diocese of Boston an opportunity to include Father John Bapst, S.J., and the Ellsworth affair of 1854 in his history. Bishop Bacon was consecrated on April 22, 1855, by Archbishop Hughes, and took possession of his See on May 31, 1855. Bishop Fitzpatrick preached also on this occasion.

One of the most interesting proposals made at this First Plenary Council, as far as the Boston Diocese was concerned,

⁴⁶ *Memoranda*, Nov. 5, 6, 1853,

was that of Archbishop Purcell. He suggested that Boston should be raised to the dignity of an archbishopric. The idea evidently originated with Archbishop Kenrick, of Baltimore. At least as early as the first months of 1852, Archbishop Kenrick wrote to Bishop Spalding, of Louisville, stating that, in his opinion, Boston should be so honored.⁴⁷ His letter also makes it clear that Bishop Fitzpatrick had no inkling as to what was going on. When the matter was brought up for discussion, the majority of the bishops were in favor of it, but Archbishop Hughes, to whose Province Boston now belonged, opposed it.⁴⁸ The most satisfactory explanation of this is that, when Bishop Fitzpatrick found out what was going on, he immediately consulted with Archbishop Hughes, whose word would have greater weight in the Council than his, and urged him to stop it. Yet, despite Archbishop Hughes' stand, the proposal was carried to Rome, along with the Council's request for a number of new sees. There, evidently, Bishop Vandeveld, of Chicago, who carried the decrees and petitions to the Holy City, was called upon to give full details as to the Boston question. Doubtless he revealed Archbishop Hughes' views, and, perhaps, Bishop Fitzpatrick's. With this information as a guide, Rome sent back word that it seemed best "to put off the erection of the Archdiocese of Boston."⁴⁹

There was a new discussion of the matter at the First New York Provincial Council (opened September 30, 1854).⁵⁰ For some reason Archbishop Hughes now reversed his attitude and recommended the change. Clearly Bishop Fitzpatrick had not altered his position, and probably in deference to him, all his colleagues, except Bishop McFarland, opined against it.⁵¹

⁴⁷ Archbishop Kenrick to Bishop Spalding, *loc. cit.*

⁴⁸ Archbishop Kenrick to Archbishop Hughes, Jan. 7, 1853 (*New York Dioc. Arch.*, A 12).

⁴⁹ *Concilium Plenarium totius Americae septentrionalis foederatae, Baltimore habitum anno 1852* (Baltimore, 1853), p. 64.

⁵⁰ The Province of New York was established in 1850. Boston, which had been under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan See of Baltimore, was transferred to the new Province of New York.

⁵¹ Archbishop Hughes to Archbishop Kenrick, Oct. 6, 1854 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 29 I 4).

Five years later the idea was again under discussion, and Bishop Fitzpatrick once more was working against it. This time he seems to have taken some rather drastic steps, for he wrote to his friend Archbishop Purcell:

The opening of a metropolitan see at Boston has, I presume, received its deathblow from my own hand. The reason why I dealt the blow was that I saw no substantial gain which would result from the measure.⁵²

When or how he dealt this blow is not apparent. But he saw Archbishop Hughes about this time,⁵³ who was then doubtless preparing for the Provincial Council that took place in January, 1860. Very possibly, in that connection Archbishop Hughes may have renewed the proposal and Bishop Fitzpatrick may have decisively rejected it.

The Bishop's steady opposition to a metropolitan see cannot be doubted. Any question of this is swept aside by a statement of Bishop de Goësbriand preaching at the Boston Cathedral the day Archbishop Williams received the pallium. He said that Bishop Fitzpatrick "did not wish it to be done in his day. . . ." ⁵⁴ One reason may have been that it would have attracted the attention of the strong anti-Catholic forces in Massachusetts to the increasing importance of the Diocese, and caused them to double their persecution of the Church. Another may have been the Bishop's humility, which led him to refuse what was after all a great personal honor. His "deathblow" in 1859 may have been caused by his realization of his weakened physical condition, and a consequent fear that he could not carry out the labors of supervising a province as well as his own statement that the change would bring "no substantial gain." At any rate, whatever the reason or reasons, the fact is that Boston could have been a metropolitan see years before it actually became one, and that Bishop Fitzpatrick, for some good motive, refused and prevented it.

⁵² Bishop Fitzpatrick to Archbishop Purcell, Aug. 20, 1859 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

⁵³ Bishop Fitzpatrick to Archbishop Hughes, Sept. 20, 1859 (*New York Dioc. Arch.*, A 11).

⁵⁴ *Pilot*, May 8, 1875.

VI

While most American bishops had been accustomed to make frequent trips to Europe in the interest of their dioceses, hitherto no Bishop of Boston had ever found time or leisure for such a journey. American bishops were expected to make their *ad limina* visits to Rome once in every seven years, but the Bishops of Boston seem always to have had themselves excused. By 1854, however, a sufficient amount of business requiring attention in Europe had piled up, and Bishop Fitzpatrick decided that he could drop the many details that occupied him in Boston for a few months. He had only the most meagre income to meet his expenses, but spontaneous gifts from the priests and people, made when they heard he wished to go, took care of this difficulty.⁵⁵ With Father Haskins as a companion, he left Boston for Liverpool aboard the steamer *Arabic* on February 14, 1854.⁵⁶ Arrived in England, they went on to London, where they met Father Faber, of St. Philip's Oratory. Then the two traveled to Paris.

Here the Bishop had a very important matter to accomplish. It will be recalled that the Society for the Propagation of the Faith had ceased in 1845 to make donations to the Diocese. The reason was perfectly legitimate: the officials felt that Boston had developed so well that it could now get along without aid. That happy state, however, was lost when the immigrant expansion began, and although Bishop Fitzpatrick managed very well, still he did need desperately every possible cent he could raise to keep pace with the demands on his treasury. It is not strange then to find him pleading his cause before the officers of the Society. Nor did he fail. This exposition of his needs convinced the priests in charge, and, once more, the Propagation of the Faith Society became a benefactor of the Boston Diocese.

This success having been achieved, Bishop Fitzpatrick went on to Rome. The end of the Lenten season was drawing near

⁵⁵ *Memoranda*, Feb. 7, 13, 1854.

⁵⁶ *Pilot*, Feb. 18, 1854.

when he arrived, and the Bishop and Father Haskins observed Palm Sunday by attending the services at St. Peter's, where they received their palm from the Pope. On Holy Thursday Bishop Fitzpatrick had the honor, together with the Bishop of St. Flour, of serving the Pope's Mass.

Pius IX found a great deal of pleasure in the company of the young prelate, and he had many audiences with the Pope. On one occasion the Holy Father presented Bishop Fitzpatrick with a handsome alb, which became one of his treasured possessions.

The visit to Rome was not merely an *ad limina*. Bishop Fitzpatrick had many plans for the future development of the Diocese. One of the foremost of these was the building of a great centre of Catholic education. He already had Holy Cross College. Now he wanted another institution of higher learning in Boston. With a breadth of vision that looked far into the future, he saw a day when this work, started by him and entrusted to the Jesuits, would have progressed so favorably that here in Massachusetts there would be a center of Catholic learning rivaling those of Europe. But obstacles had to be removed. The favorable interest of the Jesuits at Rome had to be secured. Contacts with older foundations of the Society in Germany or Italy seemed advisable. Here is what he wrote to Father McElroy, S.J., who was in charge of St. Mary's Church, Boston, and was working with him on the Boston College project:

When I saw those splendid establishments of Rome and Naples, the abundant and perennial fountain of so much good, and learned, and holy, I felt my desire for the accomplishment of our plans increase one hundredfold. I do hope that fifty years or more from now, when we shall both be in our graves, something like it may be shewn in Boston. I have tried my best with the Father General, with the Provincials, and other Fathers of Rome and Naples. I am quite sure that I have the good wishes of all, and they have promised to bear in mind the wants of Boston. In fact, I think that I have succeeded in convincing them that the opening offered there claims their atten-

tion, and that there is scarcely to be found a place where they have equal facilities of doing immense good. (I cannot, as yet, obtain our union with the province of Germany, of Naples, or of Rome, either of which would suit us admirably. But I have strong and explicit promises that they will help us as soon as possible.)⁵⁷

Leaving Rome around the first of June, the Bishop made a tour of Italy, and then started for London, arriving on July 15th. He then went on to Dublin. This trip, apart from an interest in going to the home of his ancestors, probably was made in order to consult with the authorities of All Hallows College concerning seminarians who were studying for the Diocese.

Bishop Fitzpatrick had now been away from the Diocese about three months longer than he intended, but he had accomplished a great deal, and it was fully worth the time. To have made a personal appeal to the Jesuits and to have secured their interest in his projects alone would have justified leaving Boston for so many months. But when there was added to this the reestablishment of contributions from the Propagation of the Faith Society, and the settling of various business matters at Rome, the Bishop could well feel that he had used his precious time to good advantage. Bishop Fitzpatrick arrived home on August 18, 1854, and found himself almost immediately beset by the anxious days of Know-Nothingism.⁵⁸

VII

Within a few months after his return from Europe, Bishop Fitzpatrick began to occupy himself with the task of organizing the administrative organs of the Diocese. Up to this time these had been of the most rudimentary character, and the Bishop

⁵⁷ Bishop Fitzpatrick to Father McElroy, S.J., Rome, May 28, 1854 (*Fordham Arch.*, 12 B).

⁵⁸ The Bishop's trip is fully described in: George F. Haskins, *Travels in England, France, Italy, and Ireland* (Boston, 1856). This is an excellent account, emphasizing particularly, and at the expense of Massachusetts institutions, the Catholic charitable enterprises of France and Italy.

had little or no assistance in carrying on diocesan business. He took care of all official correspondence. The decision as to where new parishes were to be established was made by him after personal investigation, and all the details of church-building passed through his hands. The administration of the vast Cathedral parish was carried on by him. He made the investigations into all the money questions that must be brought to any bishop's attention instead of using the reports of subordinates. Bishop Fitzpatrick was constantly traveling about the territory dedicating the numerous churches that were built and administering Confirmation. The dispute over the Holy Cross College charter plagued him for years; he had to fight the Boston City Government on the question of the Leverett Street site for Boston College; the worries and trials of anti-Catholic movements had to be borne; attempts to hamper Catholic burials had to be met; the question of the use of the Protestant Bible had to be solved. He was getting his charitable institutions started. There were always petty lawsuits to bother with. In fine, Bishop Fitzpatrick was attempting to carry an always increasing burden that grew more weighty as the Diocese developed.

In the early years his policy was entirely justifiable, since he had so few priests to work on the missions. But by 1855 a change could be noted. When he took charge of the Diocese he had thirty-nine priests; in 1853 at the time when the major amputation of the States of Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont officially took place, there were sixty-six clergymen scattered throughout the four States, and the separation left him with fifty-seven. This number had increased by 1855 to sixty-one — not a great gain, indeed, but he now had a number of students preparing for the priesthood at St. Mary's, Baltimore, the two Sulpician seminaries of Montreal and Paris, and at All Hallows, Dublin. This assured him of a steady supply of priests. In fact, he was so well situated in this respect that he was turning away vocations. Bishop Fitzpatrick could, therefore, afford to assign one priest to aid him in carrying on official business.

There was another reason why he should do this. The First

Plenary Council of Baltimore decided that a chancery office should be established in each diocese, and the Bishop felt obliged to follow this decision. The first announcement of this beginning of a regular diocesan organization was made to the priests on June 24, 1855. The Rev. James A. Healy became the first Chancellor of Boston and Secretary to the Bishop.

About this time, under the encouragement of the Bishop, various religious groups, such as the Scapular, Sacred Heart, and Rosary Societies began to be established in every parish. The Association of the Holy Childhood was founded at the Holy Trinity Church, Boston, by Father Reiter, S.J., on January 1, 1855.⁵⁹ Newburyport can claim the honor of having the first Sodality of the Blessed Virgin that was affiliated with the Prima Primaria of Rome. The date was May 24, 1850.⁶⁰ The First Plenary Council also directed that the Society for the Propagation of the Faith should be encouraged in each diocese, and Bishop Fitzpatrick, therefore, in June, 1855, directed the priests to establish a branch in every parish.⁶¹ Its growth is somewhat obscure, but this much is certain. Every year the people, led by the Chancellor, Father Healy, who was the first priest to have charge of the Association, gave it generous support, and in 1857 they contributed more money than any other diocese in the United States, except New York.⁶²

By this time another important society was also in existence. Known as the Clergy Society, it was the predecessor of the Clergy Fund Society of this day. It was formed in this manner: Archbishop Cajetan Bedini, Apostolic Nuncio to the Court of Brazil, arrived in Boston on September 24, 1853, and during his stay several of the priests, amongst whom Father Nicholas O'Brien was the leader, met for the purpose of arranging for a convocation of all the clergy to greet the Archbishop. There

⁵⁹ *Pilot*, Aug. 23, Sept. 6, 1856; April 25, 1857.

⁶⁰ Miss Margaret Dooling, Affiliation Secretary of the Central Office of the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin, very kindly did the research work connected with the question of the dates when sodalities were established in the Diocese.

⁶¹ Bishop Fitzpatrick to the priests of the Diocese, June 24, 1855 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁶² *Pilot*, March 5, 1859. Another report may be found in the issue of Jan. 25, 1862.

had been, for some time, a movement afoot to form a society amongst the priests, and Father O'Brien proposed that this would be an excellent opportunity, not only to assemble them to honor Archbishop Bedini, but to start the organization. His companions agreed, and an invitation was sent to all the priests to gather at the Bishop's house on October 4, 1853. On that day the entire clergy, except two or three, came together; Father O'Brien explained the purpose of the assembly, and suggested that a President and a Secretary should be elected. Father Patrick O'Beirne was chosen for the first office and Father Manasses Dougherty for the second. The moving spirits in the affair had also prepared an address to the Archbishop, and Father O'Brien was elected to read this. A few weeks later, when it became known that the Bishop intended to go to Rome in 1854, Father O'Brien again busied himself and a meeting was held on November 3, 1853. The priests sang the Office of the Dead, and a High Mass was sung for the repose of the souls of the deceased bishops and priests of the Diocese. Immediately after the Mass, an assembly was held in the Bishop's house, and it was decided that in the future a solemn High Mass would be sung in the Cathedral each year for the deceased bishops and priests, each priest would say three Masses for the repose of the soul of any diocesan clergyman who died, and a Mass would be sung at the Cathedral within thirty days of his death. At the same time all agreed to contribute ten dollars each to a fund which would be used for the support of sick and aged priests.⁶³

Several years later, the Bishop decided to insure the financial soundness of the Society, and the funds were turned over to Andrew Carney for investment.⁶⁴

⁶³ The papers concerning this organization may be found in the Boston Diocesan Archives under the years 1853, 1854, and 1855. See also: *Memoranda*, Nov. 3, 1853; *Pilot*, Nov. 12, 1853.

⁶⁴ *Memoranda*, Jan. 10, 1856. The Society evidently was not successful, and it remained for Father John Williams, who became its Secretary in 1854, really to make something of it when he became Archbishop of Boston.

VIII

At this point, and on the basis of what had been accomplished, it should be possible to survey the scene and say that the Diocese of Boston now began to show signs of functioning as a well-organized unit. A progressive and comprehensive plan of development had appeared. A multitude of churches were being, and had been, founded. Schools were being started. Holy Cross College was recovering from the disastrous fire of 1852. Father McElroy, S.J., and the Bishop were only waiting a turn in affairs to commence Boston College. Charitable institutions were being opened. There was any amount of opposition, but even that seemed to have reached its peak, and signs were not lacking that it would begin to wane. Everything necessary for a grand expansion that would make Boston one of the leading dioceses of the country was present. And then tragedy struck the very heart of the Diocese.

Early in 1857, Bishop Fitzpatrick began to show signs of failing health, and, finally, in July he had to give up his work. A congestion of blood in the brain made him an almost helpless invalid. He could scarcely walk, and his sight was almost completely destroyed. He sought rest by retiring to Holy Cross College, expecting that in a short time he would be restored to health. But the disease was chronic. Advised by his physicians to go to Europe, he refused, feeling it impossible to drop diocesan business entirely. July, August, and September dragged by, and in October, being somewhat recovered, the Bishop went to the Adirondacks, where he camped in the woods and found recreation in fishing and hunting. Then he came back to Boston, and for the rest of the year and the entire period of 1858 alternated between periods of rest and labor. By the end of 1858, he still felt the effects of the affliction and could work but a few hours a day. Yet that same determined spirit and devotion to duty that had carried him through the early years, heedless of warnings that he would collapse, drove him on, and he was again a prodigious worker. He did, however,

give himself some relief. In 1857, while totally incapacitated, he made Father John Williams his Vicar-General, and this great character from then on was always at his side seeking to lighten the strain of the episcopate.

CHAPTER III

IMMIGRANT FLOOD

I

A TENSE SILENCE held the congregation of the ten o'clock Mass in the Cathedral in almost motionless poise as Bishop Fitzpatrick appeared in the pulpit; when he paused for a moment to survey the crowded aisles and seats, the congregation, as if at a command, swayed forward, eagerly straining to hear any word that he would utter; the Bishop glanced at a paper he carried, and then his voice reverberated through the old structure, freighted with appeal, saturated with emotion and sorrow, rich, full, melodious; a few words of introduction, and then:

A voice comes to us from across the ocean. The voice that crosses the ocean should reach our hearts; should make them thrill and vibrate to the core; should stir up their lowest depths. For it comes from our home, or at least from the home of our loved fathers and friends. If we follow it up to its first place of departure, we shall find in the same place the warm fountain of the life-blood that courses through our veins, and that blood must indeed be degenerate if it remain unmoved and cold when the sound of these mournful accents is heard. It is the voice of Ireland. This hapless country forgets her past griefs, great as they were, because one greater than all has come upon her. She no longer laments her lost liberties, as in years gone by, nor complains of the galling fetters that still bind her, but she bewails her sons and her daughters, and her little children suffering, starving and dead. The loud cry of her anguish has gone through the world. She calls upon all, she calls on you especially, dearly beloved brethren, to look upon her sufferings with eyes of compassion, to enter her wretched cabins, to go over her desolate fields, to climb her hillsides, and descend into her valleys, to view on all sides her

poor children who have fainted away searching vainly for food, consumed by the fever's fire, frantic, mad with the pangs of hunger, and expiring of inanition in the most excruciating pains.

Came then an appeal for generosity, not ordinary generosity but extraordinary, a charity spirited by sacrifice that was "heroic and generous."

If in the present season we were to behold in the streets and highways around the doors of our dwellings, and in the adjoining habitations, men, and women, and children, dying of hunger; if we heard with our own ears their wild shrieks of famine and despair, heard them crying out for a morsel of food to save them from the grasp of death, we should justly deem ourselves not only unchristian but inhuman, if we hesitated to part with all that is superfluous, or even to share with them our last loaf of bread, as long as we had a hope of obtaining another for ourselves. This is what charity would dictate and command; and unless we obey this dictate, this command, we should be faithless to our obligations as Christians.

Persuasiveness and the appeal to duty, however, were not his only devices, he spoke also in command:

It is not necessary to tell you, with all the Fathers of the Church, that whatever you possess beyond the wants of your condition belongs to the poor, and cannot be withheld from them without injustice. It is not necessary to tell you that he whose money is dearer to him than the life of a brother who dies for want of money and of food is a monster, deserving the execration of God and man. Apathy and indifference, on an occasion like this, are inseparable from crime.¹

The Bishop's descent from the pulpit was accompanied by a silence ghastly in its stillness. These people had known of the hard times in Ireland, many of them had fled from the curse of the potato blight, but here, in vivid terms, had been described for them a situation far more serious than any had imagined or experienced. In stunned quiet they meditated, and more

¹ *Pilot*, Feb. 13, 1847.

and more vividly the picture took shape in their minds. Most of them could remember Ireland, see the fields, vision the rotting crops, the wretched shacks of the cottiers, and the not much better homes of the tenant farmers; many had fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, some wives and children who were caught in the horror, helpless, unable to break the shackles of starvation, doomed. Even now some loved one might be flung by a cold hearth, prostrated in some ditch or field, the ravages of starvation slowly suffocating the flame of life. Tears streamed from suppliant eyes that were raised to the Host at the Elevation, silent lips cried out a prayer, fingers convulsed in an agony of petition. And then they went forth from the Cathedral to pour their energies into a perfect frenzy of effort to raise relief for the sufferers.

Famine in Ireland for a hundred years was not an occasional phenomenon, but a chronic state, since the people's principal article of food was the seemingly hardy and durable potato, a tuber that actually was a weakling, quite easily destroyed by a variety of diseases. Unfortunately, the Irish depended on it, not only for a money crop, but to supply their own needs, and when it failed, they starved. The famine that began in 1846 was unprecedented; others had lasted a year or two, this went on for five. To make the calamity worse, other crops, such as wheat, oats, turnips, beans, and onions, were also diseased. Pigs, another staple of diet, were likewise destroyed by starvation, since there was nothing to feed them with, or were killed to be eaten; moreover, since 1839 cattle had suffered from an epidemic, and many herds were lost. In other words, practically every internal source from which sustenance might be drawn was at this time wholly cut off or badly crippled. The results in human losses were appalling. Tens of thousands died from actual starvation, but the great majority of deaths resulted from cholera, dysentery, and other diseases that come in the wake of famine.²

² Stephen Gwynn, *The History of Ireland* (New York, 1923), pp. 460-463; John T. O'Rourke, *The History of the Great Irish Famine of 1847* (Dublin, 1875); Mary Hayden, M.A., and George A. Moonan, *A Short History of the Irish People* (New York, n.d.), pp. 496-499.

The tale of the Irish people's sufferings has been told time and again. Histories of Ireland call the Famine of 1846 one of the major calamities in the long list of tragedies that Erin has suffered. Many a child, whose parents or grandparents fled from the terror of those days, has sat by the kitchen stove during a long winter evening and listened to tales of the year of the *Black Potato*. The Famine is a point in Time for the Irish by which the occurrence of events before and after is reckoned.

II

The steamer *Hibernia* brought to Boston, on January 25, 1847, the first full news as to the extent of the horror in Ireland.³ Of course the people knew that hard times prevailed in the Old Country, and for months they had been warned of what was coming or was already setting in, and had been urged to unite in an organized campaign for relief.⁴ But little or nothing had been done, and it was Bishop Fitzpatrick who started a relief movement. By February 6th he had written the Pastoral Letter already quoted (it was his first Pastoral Letter), which was read in all the churches of Boston and the vicinity, on Sunday, February 7th; that evening a meeting was held in the Chapel of the Cathedral to discuss the matter.⁵ Out of this came the organization of a temporary committee to supervise collections throughout the Diocese, while in the city of Boston districts were named and collectors appointed. The work of gathering contributions was borne along on the crest of a wave of enthusiasm. Day by day the money rolled in. Cities, towns, villages, societies, and Holy Cross College all shared in it, and by March 1st the Bishop was able to send to Archbishop Crolly, of Armagh, the sum of \$20,000.⁶ To this the Cathedral parish contributed \$6,537.66, an amount so enormously out

³ *Memoranda*, Jan. 25, 1847.

⁴ *Pilot*, March 6, 1847.

⁵ *Pilot*, *loc. cit.*; Feb. 13, 1847.

⁶ *Memoranda*, Feb. 27, 1847. The draft of the Bishop's letter to Archbishop Crolly is in the Boston Diocesan Archives; also the Archbishop's reply; cf. also *Memoranda*, March 1, 1847; *Pilot*, March 6, 1847. The sum is approximate, the actual amount sent being £4,117, 11s., 8d.

of proportion with that received from other parishes that it is certain that Andrew Carney, the treasurer of the fund, must have weighted it heavily with his contribution.

In the meantime the Bishop decided that a permanent organization should be established, and on February 21st, the Relief Association for Ireland was formed.⁷ It collected and forwarded an additional \$4,000 on May 1st.⁸ But even more and more contributions were given until by June 23rd gifts from the Catholics of the Diocese amounted to over \$150,000. The strain the people put on their resources can be judged by the experience of two Franciscan brothers who arrived in Boston seeking to raise funds for the starving in Connemara. Bishop Fitzpatrick could give them permission to make only a private collection because, as he wrote:

The Catholics of the diocese have already sent out by public and private remittances over \$150,000. The people are exhausted; our own streets filled with the most destitute poor, with parentless children exposed to perversion, and our own orphan asylums are at this moment without funds.⁹

The cry of distress that came from tortured Ireland in 1846 was heard not only by the Catholics; their Yankee neighbors paused in their pursuits and, listening to the voice of suffering, eagerly rallied to give succor. Calls to do something for the victims came from many sources. The *New England Puritan* jolted its readers with the statement that the Catholics of the United States had already sent \$500,000 to Ireland, and it was time for the Protestants to awake from their lethargy.¹⁰ The *Boston Courier* published an eloquent letter from John Greenleaf Whittier asking for a public meeting of Boston citizens to plan ways of raising money to save the Irish from starvation.¹¹ Ministers from their pulpits pleaded that the law of charity should be fulfilled. Public officials urged that the progress of

⁷ *Pilot*, Feb. 27, 1847; March 6, 1847.

⁸ *Ibid.*, May 1, 1847. The Archbishop's reply to Bishop Fitzpatrick is in the Boston Diocesan Archives, May 21, 1847, and also in *The Pilot*, July 10, 1847.

⁹ *Memoranda*, June 23, 1847.

¹⁰ *New England Puritan*, Feb. 11, 1847.

¹¹ *Boston Vindicator*, quoting the *Boston Daily Courier*, Feb. 11, 1847.

the famine should be halted by American aid. Out of all these appeals came the organization of the greatest charity drive of the period. Mayor Josiah Quincy, of Boston, formed the New England Relief Committee, to which contributions poured in, not only from adjacent localities, but even from Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Arkansas.¹²

The Committee gathered contributions amounting to \$151,007.05, of which Massachusetts gave \$116,041.96, and Boston \$52,162.94. Huge quantities of provisions were purchased, and seven vessels, including two United States war vessels, the frigate *Macedonian* and the sloop-of-war *Jamestown*, carried these gifts to Ireland.¹³

Robert B. Forbes, of Boston, deserves great credit for the part played by him in this relief work. He conceived the plan of avoiding much of the expense connected with shipping the cargoes by using United States warships. Congress allowed the use of two vessels, despite the fact that we were then at war with Mexico, and Forbes assumed the responsibility of commanding each in turn. The *Jamestown* was the first to make the trip. Forbes later wrote an account of it: a highly entertaining narrative, redolent with the spirit of a man who loved the sea and was fired with a solicitous desire to relieve suffering and distress.¹⁴

III

While Irish emigration in 1847 can be traced to the precipitate flight of the cottier class (and those who were involved in its economic circle, tradesmen, artisans, and shopkeepers) from the starvation and disease of the famine, it is necessary, in describing the emigration that took place in subsequent years, to bring in other factors of a more far-reaching and lasting effect

¹² *Pilot*, Jan. 15, 1848.

¹³ Justin Winsor, ed., *The Memorial History of Boston, Including Suffolk County, Massachusetts, 1630-1880* (Boston, 1881), IV, 667.

¹⁴ Robert B. Forbes, *The Voyage of the Jamestown on Her Errand of Mercy* (Boston, 1847).

than the mere failure of a potato crop.¹⁵ The Irish exodus of 1847 can be definitely traced to the famine, but the going forth of later years was motivated by causes that sprang from the social and economic organization of Ireland. In the first place, there was the repeal of the English Corn Laws in 1847, which subjected the Irish farmer to the competition of importations. The result was a scramble to adjust farming policy to the new situation. Some agriculturists sold their land or gave up their leases. Others turned the fields into pasturage. A great number of cottiers could no longer find work on the farms and left for America. Another factor was the Irish Poor Law of 1847, which provided that no one holding as much as a quarter of an acre of land could receive public assistance. Those who possessed a quarter of an acre on which to live and raise a few vegetables could, together with some outside employment, scarcely get any kind of living unless they benefited by some charity. Rather than continue under such conditions, they surrendered their holdings and set out for the United States. But they left their families behind, to be supported at public expense until they had earned enough money to bring them over to the new country. Somebody had to pay the rates to support these dependents, and the question arose as to who would be taxed. The law made a definite cleavage between those who would pay and those who would not by stating that anyone whose yearly taxes were four pounds or less was exempted. What happened, however, was that those who were not exempted saw the danger of their property being gradually dissipated by taxes, and, rather than submit, they sold out and joined those who were going to the States. The old heartless policy of clearances — that is, pulling down the tenants' houses and devoting the fields to grazing — also made its contribution in the families that were put off the land. The potato also made its contribution. Some hardy souls managed to get seed potatoes and made a successful planting in 1847. This encouraged others to imitate

¹⁵ In discussing the famine, I have made free use of that outstanding work by the late Marcus Lee Hansen, *The Atlantic Migration, 1607-1860: a History of the Continuing Colonization of the United States. With a Foreword by Arthur M. Schlesinger* (Cambridge, 1940).

them in 1848. But the latter year proved to be a disastrous one. The blight appeared again, and a crop failure as extensive as that of 1846 resulted. A final cause of an increasing migration was the passage in 1850 of the Encumbered Estates Act. Many Irish property-holders were deeply in debt, but when their creditors attempted to satisfy their claims by selling their debtor's property, they found it impossible to get a clear title to the land because of legal tangles. The Encumbered Estates Act cleared all these away and it became possible to secure a certain and safe transfer of property. The old landlords were dispossessed. In their place came English and Scottish owners who knew not the tenants on their newly acquired domains. They were seeking a profit from their investment and were convinced that it was to be found in cattle-raising. Their tenants were evicted to make room for the new system.

This, then, is the background against which Irish immigration to the United States must be set. First of all, the migration of 1847 was inspired principally by an urge to flee from hunger and disease, but after this other causes appeared, and the Corn Laws, the giving over of the land to grazing and cattle-raising, the Poor Laws and their taxes, another potato crop failure, and the Encumbered Estates Act, all made their contributions to the Great Migration of the 1850's.

IV

One thing that impresses anyone making a study of the documents of the day relating to immigration is the constant cry that Massachusetts was being deluged with a flood of the most miserable, poverty-stricken, and disease-ridden people that ever appeared in the ports of any country or state asking for admission — dressed in rags, starved and begging for food, many of them blind, lame, or insane. The records seem to indicate that only the poorest of the Irish poor — the inmates of almshouses and workhouses and the cast-off tenants of landlords who eagerly gave them passage money to get rid of them — were the cargoes discharged by the emigrant ships that came

to Boston. Actually, however, the picture is not a true one. The 1847 emigrant often used the few coins he had hidden away in some corner of his cabin to buy a passage ticket. For years upon years these people had been the victims of one of the most terrible systems of oppression and misrule that the modern world has known. The famine had finally broken the hold they had on the Old Country and had cast them forth to be flung helter-skelter upon a foreign, and, for the most part, hostile, shore. Yet even in the famine years some of the emigrants still had a bit of the earth's possessions; they left, not so much because of poverty as because they despaired of Ireland's future, saw in the potato blight a sign that the land was under a kind of curse, believed that "Ireland's done for." With the opening of the year 1848, the factors just outlined came into play and people of some means, who had previously clung with grim determination to ancestral homes, now appeared in the harbors of Ireland or England seeking a passage. The London *Evening Post* marked the difference in 1848, and observed that, while in 1846 and 1847 it was mostly laborers and cottiers that migrated, in 1848 emigration was principally composed of small farmers and tradesmen, shopowners and city dealers.¹⁶ Each year more and more of the comfortable folk left Ireland, no longer able to bear the burden of the Poor Laws.¹⁷ By 1851 reports reached the United States that in Dublin the quays were crowded, and every train added its quota of well-to-do farmers with their wives and children. This does not mean that the less fortunate had ceased seeking to wrench themselves from the morass in which they had been living; if they were not impelled by their own ambition to escape, the land clearings forced emigration upon them; but they were in better physical condition than during the famine years, better prepared to make the boisterous Atlantic crossing and to enter immediately into the economic life of the States.¹⁸

¹⁶ Quoted by the *Catholic Observer*, Oct. 18, 1848.

¹⁷ Hansen, *The Atlantic Migration*, p. 281.

¹⁸ *Boston Daily Advertiser*, Aug. 11, 1855. *Report of the Superintendent of Alien Passengers for Boston, 1853, Senate Doc. 10*, p. 4; *ibid.*, 1861, *Public Doc. 16*, p. 4.

V

The Irishman who set out from his farm, or city, or village home for America could be quite sure that he would find plenty of shipping in Irish ports to take him on the journey.¹⁹ Those sailing directly from Ireland took passage in the timber ships,²⁰ or in grain ships that had come to supply the famine sufferers or to take advantage of the repeal of the Corn Laws. These vessels were temporarily converted to the business of carrying passengers by the installation of bunks.²¹ The great majority of emigrants preferred, however, to go to an English port for transportation. Liverpool was the great embarkation point.²² In this port could be found accommodations in vessels carrying finished products back to the United States, for such cargoes left considerable space that could be fitted up as a steerage by the installation of rough bunks and partitions. Then there was the opportunity of getting aboard regular passenger ships, such as Train and Company ran to Boston. From 1847 to 1850 the major part of the trade was carried on in adapted cargo vessels; but as the numbers leaving held up from year to year, as Passenger Acts became more stringent, as more capital became available, and as changes were made in the design and motive power of ships, there was a gradual transition to vessels that had been built for passenger carrying. This was especially true of American ships.²³

VI

Up to 1850 emigrant ships were often horrible affairs fitted with makeshift accommodations that furnished living quarters scarcely suitable for the carrying of cattle — not to speak of

¹⁹ Hansen, *The Atlantic Migration*, p. 249 *et seq.*

²⁰ *Parliamentary Papers, Report from Committees, Emigrant Ships, Session 31st January — 12th August, 1854*, XIII, 94.

²¹ *Ibid.*, *loc. cit.*, p. 79.

²² Frances Morehouse, "The Irish Migration of the Forties," *Am. Hist. Rev.*, XXXIII (1928), 590.

²³ *Ibid.*, 591.

human beings. This was particularly true of the English vessels, and even after 1850, when the crack clipper ships began to skim the sea lanes, British ships continued to be of the poorest type, slow, clumsy, dirty, and ill-managed; indeed they were inferior even to the Australian convict vessels.²⁴ American ships, on the other hand, showed a continual improvement; many were built for the passenger business, and even before the advent of the clipper ships outclassed the English in every respect. In Boston, Train and Company's ships were outstanding; they had the lowest rate of mortality,²⁵ and their business was so well conducted that their advertisements bore a letter of recommendation from Bishop Fitzpatrick. The difference in the ships of the two countries can be easily seen in the larger number of emigrants who came into Boston in American rather than British vessels.²⁶

Some ships had only one emigrant deck — this was probably true of most of those entering Boston Harbor — while others had two, and the largest contained three. Hatches over the first deck gave some air and light to the passengers; emigrants on the second deck, despite wind sails and ventilation tubes, enjoyed little change in the atmosphere; while the third or orlop deck was an indescribable place, dark, low-ceilinged, and foul. An idea of living conditions on these lower decks can be gained by a study of the laws governing the amount of space allotted to each passenger. The United States Act of May 17, 1848, provided that each passenger was to be allowed fourteen square feet of deck space not occupied by stores or goods, except baggage. If the space between the decks was less than six feet high, then sixteen square feet was to be the rule, while if it was less than five feet (!) the allowance required was to be twenty-two square feet. No more than two tiers of berths were allowed (recall the five feet!), and each berth was to be six by one and a half feet.

The practice of having emigrants furnish food and cook it was extremely unsatisfactory. They were often cheated by the

²⁴ *Parliamentary Papers, loc. cit.*, pp. 76-77.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

²⁶ See the *Reports of the Superintendent of Alien Passengers*.

dealers, who gave them inferior articles that rotted during the voyage. Sometimes they were misinformed as to the amount they would need in order that, when their supply ran short, they would be forced to purchase from the captain at exorbitant prices. In some cases the emigrants did not have sufficient money to buy the required quantity of supplies. Cooking their meals was a problem. Fires were maintained on the open decks in tubs, boxes, and sometimes in stoves; generally the cooking space was uncovered; many of the grates were so small that a long line of hungry passengers waited, hour after hour, to get near them, while the sick, unable to assist themselves, had to rely on the kindness and charity of others for food. Despite the provision of the law regarding the stores that should be carried, and inspection to enforce it, shipowners could, and did, evade it, by having a tug follow the ships out to sea, and there some of the provisions would be swung over the side, and taken back to port.²⁷ Water was a problem; it often went bad on the voyage or ran short, especially if many days were spent at sea. A common way of concealing the taste and odor was to dose it with liberal quantities of vinegar.

The great curse of the emigrant ships from 1847 to 1849,²⁸ so far as Boston-bound vessels were concerned, was ship fever, a disease similar to famine fever or hunger typhus. The 1847 ships were especially ridden with it, although it should be observed that some were much worse than others.²⁹ The horror of the Atlantic passage in 1847 is attested by the reports of various institutions and persons who came in contact with the immigrants. The Directors of the House of Industry, for instance, said: “. . . many die on the passage, and the survivors on arrival are in a wretched state of filth and disease.”³⁰ A legislative committee reported that many passengers, sick with the fever, had to be taken off the ships immediately after their

²⁷ John Francis Maguire, M.P., *The Irish in America* (London, 1868), p. 180.

²⁸ I give this date because, as will be explained later, a decided improvement became noticeable after this date.

²⁹ *Annual Report of the Directors of the House of Industry*, April 1, 1847 (*Boston City Arch.*).

³⁰ *Ibid.*

arrival in the harbor and sent to the almshouse at South Boston.³¹ The Board of Aldermen of the City of Boston were told: "These immigrants are in the most deplorable condition, many of them being entirely prostrate with the ship or typhus fever in its worst form. . . ." ³² It is easy to understand why the immigrants of the forties were so often and easily stricken with the fever. They were in a physically poor condition when they left Ireland because of the famine; and the awful conditions on shipboard — the filth, the bad food and water, the lack of ventilation — all aided in breaking down what little resistance to infection they did have, and the ship fever found easy victims. Some of the stories that were told by the passengers when they arrived in Boston were horrible, and gave vivid testimony to the sufferings experienced by the Irish. One ship, the *Thomas W. Sears*, started out with 112 steerage passengers and lost 24 during the voyage.³³ Anthony Howard and his wife and five children were passengers on the *Sears*. Before he reached Boston he had lost his spouse and four of the offspring. The man had made frantic efforts to get some aid from the captain, often standing on the deck for hours waiting for an opportunity to speak to him. But the skipper was a cowardly soul, who shifted the care of the sick onto his mate until he fell ill, and then neglected them entirely, turning away requests for assistance with, "Go to h—, I'm not going among ye to get sick." When the *Sears* was tied up at Long Wharf, the last surviving Howard child, Winifred, was placed in a carriage for transportation to South Boston. By the time the almshouse was reached, Winifred was dead.³⁴

This picture of immigrant ships is a dark one. But days on the ocean could be happy. When there was a fair wind and the sails bellowed out, reaching ever forward for another mile of the distance to the new land, then there might well be mirth

³¹ *Report of the Joint Special Committee*, April 21, 1847, *House Doc. 1807* (Mass. State Arch.).

³² *Report of a Joint Special Committee*, *Minutes of the Board of Aldermen*, May 21, 1847 (Boston City Arch.).

³³ *Boston Daily Bee*, April 6, 1847.

³⁴ *Ibid.*; *Boston Evening Transcript*, April 17, 1847.

and joy. Sea chests were pulled under the open hatchway and groups gathered to talk of the new life that was ahead. Letters from those who had gone before were passed around. Men bound for the frontier made models of the log cabin their dreams had pictured in some clearing. Others walked the open deck or stood around the cooking fire. Children swarmed — no rope was safe, no rail too high for them! Violins squeaked, accordions moaned, and the tap of the jig step staccatoed the ear. Men, chafing at the inactivity, laid onto the ropes and helped the sailors work the ship. Time passed rapidly, and the days faded back into the ever-lengthening space that opened between them and Ireland. Then, after many long weeks, they were on the Banks; overboard went hand lines, and fresh fish was caught to relieve the monotonous diet. Came the entrance to Boston Harbor and a strained crowding to the rails to catch a first glimpse. The ship approached its anchorage, was brought up into the wind, the anchor was let go, seamen swarmed aloft to furl and stow the canvas, the port physician came aboard, entrance formalities were completed, and after many delays, the immigrants were conveyed up to Long Wharf and stepped ashore into the busy life of the waterfront.

CHAPTER IV

THE STATE, THE CHURCH, THE IMMIGRANT

I

UP TO 1849, a great many of the immigrants were in a wretched condition when their ships dropped anchor in Boston Harbor.¹ Yet, even in 1847, the condition of the passengers varied, some vessels coming in with only a few sick, while others arrived with records of many passengers buried at sea and a large part of the survivors ill with ship fever. For example, while the *T. W. Sears* entered port having lost 24 out of 112, the *Anglo-Saxon* had only 6 die out of 346.²

The suffering and distress prevailing amongst these immigrants is revealed in the *Report* of a Joint Special Committee of the Massachusetts General Court. This committee was appointed for the purpose of investigating the efficiency with which laws relative to the entrance of alien passengers into the State were enforced. The *Report* stated that Calvin Bailey, the Superintendent of Alien Passengers for Boston, had not, as was required by law, demanded bonds from those who brought the sick and infirm into the State in order that the Commonwealth might be saved the expense of their support if they became public charges, but had merely required that the head tax of two dollars for each person should be paid. Bailey justified his course by saying, "My only plea is humanity; and if you were to see them dying and suffering as I do, on their

¹ *Annual Report of the House of Industry and Reformation, April 1, 1847, for year ending March 31, 1847* (Boston City Arch.); *Report of the Joint Special Committee investigating petitions asking for an increase in the alien passenger tax, April 21, 1847, House Doc. 1807* (Mass. State Arch.); *Sen. Doc. 109, April 21, 1847. Minutes of the Board of Aldermen, May 21, 1847* (Boston City Arch.).

² *Boston Daily Bee*, April 6, 1847; *Boston Evening Transcript*, April 17, 1847. The *Anglo-Saxon* belonged to Train and Company.

arrival, I doubt whether you could deny them the privilege of landing." ³

Some idea of the sufferings the Irish immigrants underwent can be gained from studying the reports that were published about the number of patients that were received at the Deer Island Hospital. This was the institution that was established when it became apparent that the ever-increasing number of sick could no longer be accommodated at the House of Industry in South Boston.⁴ In May, 1847, a committee reported to the Boston Board of Aldermen that the almshouse was overcrowded, despite the fact that temporary wooden buildings had been erected, and it would be advisable to abandon the practice of using it as a hospital and erect a receiving station on Deer Island.⁵ Even while they were considering the subject, it would seem that steps were being taken to make this change. As early as May 20, 1847, the victims of ship fever were being cared for on the island, probably in tents. By July 20th, two large buildings were being built; one of which was already filled with sick, although not completed. At this time 80 patients were in a tent and 300 in the new hospital.⁶ From May 20 to June 26, 1847, 312 patients had been received,⁷ and up to July 1st, 1,506 had been admitted.⁸ On July 10th the number of sick amounted to 700,⁹ and on July 15th the *Megunticook* arrived from Liverpool with 124 passengers in the steerage, all of whom were in such poor health that preparations were made to erect tents and hospitalize all of them.¹⁰ By August 7th every tent and available building was filled,¹¹ and in October 1,611 passengers had been treated.¹²

³ *Report of the Joint Special Committee, April 21, 1847, House Doc. 1807 (Mass. State Arch.); Sen. Doc. 109, April 21, 1847.*

⁴ From Nov., 1846, the number of alien passengers landed at Boston was 6,377, and of those 355 were taken to the South Boston Institution for medical treatment. See the *Minutes of the Board of Aldermen, May 21, 1847 (Boston City Arch.)*.

⁵ *Report of a Joint Special Committee on Alien Passengers, Minutes of the Board of Aldermen, May 21, 1847 (Boston City Arch.)*. Also under Aug. 31, 1847 (*Boston City Arch.*).

⁶ *Boston Evening Traveller, July 20, 1847.*

⁷ *Pilot, June 26, 1847.*

⁸ *Pilot, July 10, 1847.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Boston Evening Traveller, July 3, 1847.*

¹⁰ *Ibid., Aug. 7, 1847.*

¹² *Ibid., Oct. 2, 1847.*

Many immigrants managed to escape disease on shipboard, only to succumb to it after living for a while in the city.¹³ To care for those who were found on the "streets, sick, destitute, and wandering without friend or a shelter to lay their weary heads," an office was opened on Long Wharf in the early days of 1848, to which the police brought these unfortunates, and then they were forwarded to Deer Island.¹⁴

Boston and Massachusetts certainly drew heavily upon their generosity when they contributed to the fund that was collected by the New England Relief Committee to aid the famine victims, but a different attitude was exhibited by many when it was a question of receiving these people into their midst. The vast majority did not want them; the newspapers were filled with denunciations of these strangers. Meetings of indignant citizens were held to protest their admission. Politicians took up the cry, and the legislative chambers were the scenes of many a fiery speech. Political parties seized the opportunity to gain votes by raising the anti-Irish banner. Truly, he was an unwelcome visitor who stepped off an emigrant vessel and ventured into the streets of Boston! There were some who were glad to see him come, those who had breadth of vision and could appreciate his value in constructing public works, laboring in the growing industries, building up the populations of cities and towns, and in a variety of ways adding to the economic growth of the State. But, as has been the case with the arrival of many of the races that have contributed to the varied composition of the citizenry and to the culture of the United States, the average man could not see beyond the confines of his own district and day. The competition that took place for jobs, the mounting expenses of supporting the sick, blind, lame, aged, and insane, the growing number of charitable institutions, the increasing importance of the Irish vote in politics, and the sight of the hated Roman Catholic faith penetrating into the life of the community — all this was sufficient to arouse the bitterest hostility.

¹³ *Ibid.*, June 26, 1847.

¹⁴ *Report of a Joint Special Committee on amending the laws relative to alien passengers, Feb., 1848, Sen. Doc., Feb., 1848 (Mass. State Arch.).*

One of the earliest demonstrations of this antipathy concerned the Deer Island Hospital. The decision to build this receiving station provoked many, and some—who they were is not apparent—decided it should be destroyed. They were imitating a plot to burn an immigrant hospital in New York. Handbills were distributed throughout Boston, proclaiming:

American citizens of Boston! The honorable Fathers of this City, have thought expedient to erect a HOSPITAL on Deer Island for the protection of FOREIGN PAUPERS! Shall they fall [fail?] like those of the City of Gotham? AMERICAN CITIZENS BE IN AT THE DEATH.¹⁵

Such a disastrous and dastardly act as this call to action advised was, fortunately, never carried out, and the long list of outrages against the Irish in Boston was spared what might well have been a holocaust, not only of buildings but of human beings as well.

The year 1849 found passenger vessels arriving in a better condition.¹⁶ And in 1850 further progress towards improvement was remarked.¹⁷ Immigrants reaching Boston in the summer of this year did not need a great deal of financial aid,¹⁸ and the port physician found few cases requiring his attention in comparison with other years.¹⁹ In 1853, although there was great mortality amongst immigrants arriving in other States, this was not true of Boston. They needed little public aid, other than to protect them against sharpers and such supervision as was necessary to see them on the way to their destination.²⁰ Each year after this no serious complaint was made by immigration officials concerning the Irish who arrived by water; very few were sick, the great majority were financially able to care for themselves, and those who were without funds

¹⁵ *Boston Vindicator*, June 3, 1847.

¹⁶ *Annual Report of the Directors of the House of Industry and Reformation*, April 1, 1849 (Boston City Arch.).

¹⁷ *Report of the Superintendent of Alien Passengers*, 1850, Senate Doc. 10, p. 5.

¹⁸ *Pilot*, July 13, 1850.

¹⁹ *Port Physician's Report*, Oct. 1, 1850 (Boston City Arch.).

²⁰ *Report of the Superintendent of Alien Passengers*, 1853, Sen. Doc. 10, p. 4.

were soon provided with work and were no burden to the State.²¹ So fine was their appearance, said *The Daily Advertiser* in 1855, that when the Know-Nothing Governor of Massachusetts went on board a ship to witness the disembarkation of the horrible Irish Catholics, whom he was constantly railing against, he mistook some of the neatly dressed steerage passengers for those who had traveled in the cabin.²²

II

The conditions under which many of the Irish lived in Boston in those days were by no means ideal. But neither was Boston a model city. The Back Bay was a cesspool — at least during the early years of the period — into which sewage was discharged, to form a noisome mass that menaced the health of all who lived in the vicinity. The sewerage system was poorly constructed and maintained. The organization for controlling sanitary conditions was, at best, elementary. While it was under the supervision of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen, it lacked the guidance of a trained personnel. The water supply was inadequate. Up to 1848 a private company supplied water drawn from Jamaica Pond to those who would accept the service on the east side of the city as far as State Street and on the west side as far as the Massachusetts General Hospital. Everyone else had to depend on wells. After 1848 the Cochituate system was put into operation, but it can be presumed that in some sections installation of this feature was not too rapid. In fact Cochituate water was a theme for the rhapsodies of a real estate agent! The modern-day lures of tiled baths, automatic heat, and complete gas or electric kitchens had their counterpart in those days in the charming boast that a house was supplied with Cochituate water. And the reporters, giving an account of some festive occasion in the papers, inevitably

²¹ *Ibid.*, 1855, *House Doc.* 17, p. 4; *ibid.*, 1856, *House Doc.* 17, p. 5; *ibid.*, 1857, *Pub. Doc.* 18, p. 4; *ibid.*, 1858, *Pub. Doc.* 15, p. 8; *ibid.*, 1861, *Pub. Doc.* 16 p. 4; *Boston Daily Advertiser*, Aug. 11, 1855.

²² *Boston Daily Advertiser*, Aug. 11, 1855.

observed, if the wine did not flow, that toasts were drunk in "pure Cochituate." Housing for the new population, in the sense of apartments built especially for that purpose, was, of course, lacking, and, as is true all through the history of immigration, most immigrants had to go into the less desirable parts of the city. From there they gradually made their way into more favorable locations. For these reasons the living conditions of many of the Irish were deplorable. But — and this is a point some investigators overlook — it should be remembered that to a large extent they did not create the situation, but were thrust into it when they landed. There was no other place for them.

Many an Irish family that set up housekeeping in Boston must have asked from time to time what had been gained by immigration. Certainly their circumstances could not have been, in a number of instances, much better than those they left behind in Ireland. Some must have been worse. During this period, in the city proper, they congregated in that part of Boston stretching out towards Roxbury known as the "Neck," and along Harrison Avenue. In the South Cove section they dwelt on the waterfront from the upper bridge to South Boston to State Street. Great numbers lived in Ann Street, on a portion of the Mill Pond territory, and on the northerly side of Cambridge Street near the Charles River. In all these localities there were numerous narrow alleys, courts, and streets, some new and some old, that had never been properly constructed and were equipped either with a makeshift sewerage system or none at all. Many of the houses on such streets, like Batterymarch, Broad, Wharf, Bread, Oliver, and Cove, had been built to accommodate one or two families, but the immigrants were literally packed into them. One house in North Square had a family of nine living in one room, in another fifteen people slept in three attic rooms, and there were more instances similar to this.²³ On Broad Street and Fort Hill were buildings from three to six stories high that sheltered from forty to one hundred inhabitants in each. Fort Hill was

²³ *Boston Evening Transcript*, Aug. 6, 1847.

an especially bad district. The houses were without common comforts and "mostly without common necessities." It was quite usual to have only one sink in a building, the drain of which opened into a small and poorly built sewer or into the street. Some buildings had no conveniences or sanitary facilities. In the neighborhood of Broad Street many warehouses had been converted, as cheaply as possible, into apartment blocks to take advantage of the increased demand for living space. Dwellers in these wretched tenements paid from \$1 to \$1.50 a week for a room, generally to a speculator who hired the building from the owner, and if the rent was not promptly paid, the tenants were quickly and brutally evicted.²⁴ In many streets the cellars of the buildings were occupied by the immigrants; and *The Pilot* quoted a City report on these dwelling-places which said:

These cellars are generally entirely beneath the surface of the ground, and to most of them, the only entrance for light and air, is by the passage or cellar doorway, leading down to them by steps from the sidewalk above. They are crowded with families, which lodge there, and make them their sole place of abode.²⁵

Few efforts were made to alleviate these conditions except that an order was passed to close up these cellars as soon as possible. The *Times*, commenting on this, declared that the City should build houses and wipe out these unhealthy sections.²⁶ It can be presumed that the cellars remained open — people live in such places in Boston today.

Such conditions easily led to the spread of disease. When cholera broke out in Boston, as it frequently did, the Irish suffered. By far the greatest number of deaths took place amongst them.²⁷ Smallpox epidemics were common,²⁸ and

²⁴ This description is based on many documents, among which a report entitled *Boston Committee on Internal Health, Report of the Committee on Internal Health on the Asiatic Cholera, 1849* (City Doc. 66, pp. 9-15), is especially important.

²⁵ *Pilot*, March 16, 1850.

²⁶ Quoted by the *Catholic Observer*, Aug. 23, 1849.

²⁷ *Boston Committee on Internal Health, op. cit.*, pp. 9-15.

²⁸ Charles E. Buckingham *et al.*, *Sanitary Condition of Boston* (Boston, 1875), p. 84.

deaths resulting from consumption became altogether too frequent.²⁹

III

Amongst the Irish themselves the establishment of a society to aid and protect their countrymen was delayed for some years. In 1847 both *The Pilot* and the *Boston Vindicator*, an Irish paper that, unfortunately, did not enjoy a very long journalistic life, began to agitate for such a society,³⁰ and on July 20, 1847, an organization meeting was actually held in Father Mathew Hall, Broad Street.³¹ The plan that was proposed was broad enough in scope to include the Rev. William H. Channing, but it is quite evident that only a few evinced any interest, and the project failed.³² In 1848 a fresh start was made, but again no one seemed to be interested, and nothing was accomplished.³³ But in 1850 a more determined spirit was exhibited. The men who were working strenuously for their idea launched it this time, not by waiting for the public to take an interest, but by raising funds through the medium of the First Annual Ball for the Relief of Immigrants. They planned to get a start and then see if the necessary support to continue would not be forthcoming.³⁴ They were able to raise two hundred and fifty dollars, the Irish Immigrant Society of Boston was organized, and plans were made to establish an office and engage one agent. By May a hall had been leased in Congress Square, and an appeal was made to all who needed help of any kind in their business to notify the agent, who would see that it was supplied.³⁵ The next step was to send an agent to Albany to obtain information about forwarding passengers by railroads and canals to the West, and establish business contacts with forward-

²⁹ *Massachusetts Sanitary Commissioners, Report of a General Plan for the Promotion of Public and Personal Health* (Boston, 1850), pp. 97 *et seq.*; Buckingham, *Sanitary Condition*, pp. 122 *et seq.*

³⁰ *Boston Vindicator*, April 15, May 27, June 3, 1847; *Pilot*, April 17, June 12, 1847.

³¹ *Pilot*, July 24, 1847.

³² *Ibid.*, Aug. 7, 1847.

³³ *Catholic Observer*, Feb. 1, 1849.

³⁴ *Pilot*, Feb. 2, March 9, 1850.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, May 4, 1850.

ing houses. This agent carried a letter from Bishop Fitzpatrick, who favored the idea of going West, to Bishop McCloskey, requesting his assistance in obtaining accurate knowledge of the best methods of carrying out the plan.³⁶

For a few years the Society was a success. Its agent visited all the ships that came into the harbor and gave advice to those on board,³⁷ although after 1853 the arrivals by sea did not give the Society much work, since they were cared for by the Superintendent of Alien Passengers, and the Society concentrated its chief attention on those coming in by land from New York, St. John, or Quebec.³⁸ Where it was necessary, lodging was furnished to the travelers and expenses to their destination were paid.³⁹ Employment was secured for a large number of men and women, and the office became a convenient agency for contractors looking for help.⁴⁰ Letters were also written giving notice of the immigrant's arrival to friends or were sent to locate families and relatives.⁴¹ An important activity was the selling of tickets to the West. In 1852 railroad companies, because of the various impositions inflicted on the immigrants by agents and their runners, decided to put an end to the practice by entering into a joint agreement to furnish a through ticket from Boston to any point east of the Mississippi River. The Emigrant Society engaged in the business of selling these tickets.⁴²

Support for this immigrant aid enterprise came from various sources. A fee was charged for membership; shipping agencies made contributions; ⁴³ philanthropists, such as John Wilson and Vine Foster, gave donations.⁴⁴ Railroad contractors contributed heavily, compensating in this way for the activities of the free employment office.⁴⁵ Thomas F. Meagher gave a lecture during the winter of 1855 which gained six hundred

³⁶ Bishop Fitzpatrick to Bishop McCloskey, May 8, 1850 (*New York Dioc Arch.*, A 22).

³⁷ *Pilot*, May 18, Dec. 28, 1850; April 21, 1855.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, Dec. 28, 1850.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, Nov. 2, 1850; April 24, 1852.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, July 13, 1850.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, Aug. 6, 1853.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, April 21, 1855.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, July 13, 1850; April 24, 1852.

⁴² *Ibid.*, Oct. 9, 1852.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, April 24, 1850.

dollars for the treasury. Bishop Fitzpatrick aided in various ways.⁴⁶

The Emigrant Society did not, however, receive the support that it deserved, and its administration was inefficient. Even in 1851 contributions were small, and the largest source of income was, beginning with 1852, the sale of passenger tickets. But this phase of the Society's activities was badly administered and was lost in 1856. The agents proved to be unreliable, sufficient care had not been taken in their selection, and they failed to conduct themselves properly. The result was that by September, 1856, the Society was badly disorganized and in need of funds. An attempt was made to revivify it, but it was useless, and the Irish Emigrant Society disappeared.⁴⁷

The State of Massachusetts did its best during the early years of the immigrant flood that almost unceasingly poured into its confines, but inexperience and conflicting opinions as to the attitude that should be taken towards the aliens contributed to an inept handling of the situation. Though the problem could never be said to have been efficiently met at any time during the years of the Fitzpatrick era, still after 1852 a greater competency in dealing with the situation was exhibited, and the Superintendent of Alien Passengers office began to function along lines of activity other than counting and examining passengers and sending away those who could not be admitted to the State. In 1852 the Emigrant Society made arrangements with the office to have immigrants forwarded out of the State without being molested by boarding-house keepers. When A. G. Goodwin became Superintendent in 1853, he was able to say, probably with some exaggeration, in his first *Report*, that the vigilance exercised by his agents was so successful that no manager of lodging-houses dared to cheat his customers.⁴⁸ The office also wrote letters to friends of the immigrants notifying them of their arrival in Boston. An agent bought their railroad tickets and gave them directions as to how to reach their destination, and a representative accompanied those who journeyed

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, April 21, 1855.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, Sept. 27, Oct. 4, 1856.

⁴⁸ *Report of the Superintendent of Alien Passengers, 1854, Sen. Doc. 10, p. 4.*

to the West. An employment bureau was also established, and those who were without funds, but able to labor, were assisted in finding work.⁴⁹

IV

The industrial development already described in Part Three continued during this period, and by 1850 New England was the chief manufacturing centre of the United States,⁵⁰ with Massachusetts the leader in the manufacture of such goods as worsted,⁵¹ cotton, boots and shoes. The mills of Lawrence were springing out of the woods along the Merrimac, and Lowell was increasing its productive capacities. The Blackstone Valley became one of the principal textile districts of the nation.⁵² In New Hampshire, Manchester and Nashua were being developed, while in Maine mill towns came into existence on the Piscataqua and Saco Rivers. In Salem, Newburyport, and Portsmouth, there were factories powered by steam. Into all these factories the Irish were going, first to do the rough work and then to run the machines. The change that took place is well illustrated by Fall River, where in 1826 out of 612 employed only 38 were foreigners; in 1846 there was a definite increase in the number of Irish employed, and by 1860 the mill population was chiefly Irish and English.⁵³ The new immigrant labor also sought employment in other businesses: the Quincy quarry industry attracted many; they could be found working on the various public works such as the Cochituate aqueduct; and many were being taken into the shoe industry to run the machines that were being introduced into the business at this time. Said one contemporary writer concerning the

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 1855, *House Doc.* 17, p. 4.

⁵⁰ Ernest Ludlow Bogart, Ph.D., *Economic History of the United States* (New York, Chicago, Boston, Toronto, 1938), p. 179.

⁵¹ Arthur Harrison Cole, Ph.D., *The American Wool Manufacture* (Cambridge, 1926), p. 274.

⁵² Edward C. Kirkland, *A History of American Economic Life* (New York, 1932), p. 309.

⁵³ Victor S. Clark, *History of Manufactures in the United States* (New York, 1929), I, 398.

Irish and their entrance into the economic life of the State:

Great numbers of them have been employed in making our railroads, and in other works requiring many laborers . . . we find some of them in most towns. Boston Corner and Monroe, containing an aggregate of 303 inhabitants on the first of last May, are the only towns in the Commonwealth I have heard from, in which there are not foreigners by birth. They are found especially in those towns and villages in which the growth of late years has been much favored with railroad accommodation. In the towns they are hired by the farmers, and in some instances they have purchased farms which they cultivate. In the cities and villages they find employment as servants, as laborers, shoemakers, as bakers, as masons, as carpenters, etc., in stores, in public houses, in stone-cutting, glass-works, chemical works, etc. Many of them are employed in Lowell, Leicester, Palmer, Northampton, and other places in the cotton and woollen factories . . . in some places it is thought that the factories can hardly be carried on without them.⁵⁴

In Boston, industry, assured of a steady and increasing supply of labor, developed tremendously. In fact, it was the Irish who made the industrialization of the city possible.⁵⁵

By 1866 the Irish had advanced to a point where they were dominating the domestic service field, constituted the major part of the hired farm labor, formed the largest part of the mill operatives, and had thoroughly penetrated the shoe business. They were now "extensive owners of real estate," owning a large number of small shops, houses, and farms. They performed a "very large proportion of the physical labor throughout the State. . . . As far as muscular exercise is concerned, they constitute the 'bone and sinew' of the land, and it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to dispense with their services." ⁵⁶

⁵⁴ *Report of the State Census of Boston, 1850, City Doc. 42*, pp. 47-48.

⁵⁵ Oscar Handlin, *Boston's Immigrants, 1790-1865: A Study in Acculturation* (Cambridge, 1941), pp. 83 *et seq.*

⁵⁶ *Third Annual Report of the Board of State Charities of Massachusetts, to Which are Added the Reports of the Secretary, and the General Agent of the Board. January, 1867* (Boston, 1867), pp. 25-26.

V

The history of the Diocese of Boston between 1846 and 1866 is most intimately related to Irish immigration and the entrance of the immigrant into industry. It is impossible to say just how many of the 183,777 inhabitants of Massachusetts in 1865, who were born in Ireland, were Catholics,⁵⁷ but a conservative estimate would include the great majority within the Faith. Unfortunately, whatever statistics Bishop Fitzpatrick did collect are of no value in attempting to arrive at any conclusion, and the best clue, indefinite as it is, is merely to point to the pages describing the development of churches and parishes. No such expansion could ever have taken place if tens of thousands had not come to swell the ranks of the Diocese. In 1846 there were forty-eight churches scattered throughout four States; in 1866 there were one hundred and nine in Massachusetts alone. In 1846 thirty-nine priests served forty-eight churches; in 1866 one hundred and sixteen priests attended one hundred and nine churches.

The relation of industry to diocesan development means just this: as the Irish entered more and more into the mills and factories or went to work on railroads and other public works or on the farms, they tended to congregate in certain centres, and as their numbers grew, a demand arose for priests and churches to supply their spiritual needs. Let the point be demonstrated by the construction of railroads. The settlement of laborers at various points along the construction line brought Irish to Bellows Falls. The first Mass at Athol was said in the shanty of a worker on the Fitchburg Railroad. The development of the Cheshire line introduced Catholics to Winchendon, while the running of the Providence Railroad from South Framingham to Milford gave the Church its start in the latter town. When the Housatonic transportation system was being built, the Irish went to Lee, while Catholic workmen laboring on the New London and Northern Railroad made up the con-

⁵⁷ The figures were taken from the State census for 1865.

gregation at Monson. Malden benefited from the Boston and Maine, and as a result the Catholic population increased.

There is another point that must be emphasized here: namely, the Diocese by building churches made a valuable contribution to the development of towns and industry; the mills of some towns would never have survived without the Catholic Church. The reason is simple enough. The Irish were Catholics, and they were absolutely devoted to their religion. If the town where the mill was located did not have a church at least within a reasonable distance, then, as soon as they could get a job in some other place where there was a church, they left, and the mill experienced constant difficulty in getting a steady supply of labor. This can be illustrated by the experience that Amos Lawrence had with the mills at Salmon Falls, New Hampshire, when he tried to place them on a profitable basis. Pliny Lawton, the superintendent, was ordered by Lawrence to find some solution, and he gave this answer to the problem: A stable supply of labor was absolutely necessary, he said; American help was "out of the question," while foreign workmen would stay only if there was a church. They did come, but only until they had learned the trade, then they looked for a job at one of the mill centres where they could easily fulfill their religious duties. The only solution, therefore, was to build a church, and thus hold the workers. But Lawton warned that if a church was built, it must not be known that the Company had financed it, for in that case rival manufacturers would spread unfriendly stories. "For instance," he wrote, "a person at work in a factory say [*sic*] to their Overseer that they are going to Salmon Falls because there is a Church there. The reply is that the Church is a Trap built by the company to catch poor Catholics that they may grind their faces."⁵⁸ Evidently Lawton had had experience before with the attractiveness of a Catholic church to the Irish.

The development of industry brought many social problems: child labor, sweatshops, women in industry, unhealthy work-

⁵⁸ Pliny Lawton to A. A. Lawrence, Dec. 23, 1853 (*Lawrence Papers, Mass. Hist. Soc.*).

ing conditions, small wages, long hours, the change from the familiar relationship that existed between employer and employee, when the owner was in direct touch with the workers, to the absenteeism of the capitalistic system, and the necessity of producing a profit for stockholders. The famous features of the Waltham system had vanished by 1850. Young ladies who had gone to the Lowell mills as to a boarding-school now stayed away. The immigrant, who had first been used in the mills for more menial tasks, began to operate the machines. Employees were subject to the restrictions of a black list. Any worker entering the service of a mill had to stay for twelve months. Failure to do so meant the refusal of a certificate of discharge. The name of the mill hand was passed on to the other companies and he was blacklisted. This system was practiced extensively in Lowell.⁵⁹ Hours of labor, averaging twelve hours and eighteen minutes a day in Lowell in 1845, were reduced in 1847 fifteen minutes a day during eight months of the year and thirty minutes during the other four months. In 1850 the average day was eleven hours and fifty-eight and two thirds minutes.⁶⁰ In 1854, however, a legislative committee reported that in Lowell, although the average for the year was a minute and a fraction less than twelve hours a day, actually the operatives worked twelve and a half hours during several months of the year, and for a short period the working day exceeded thirteen hours.⁶¹ In mill centres outside of Lowell the workers, in some instances, labored longer than this.⁶² The committee estimated the average operative had about nine hours of each working day "for sleep, and for religious contemplation and improvement, for intellectual and moral culture, for social intercourse, and health-giving recreation and amusement."⁶³

Nor were these the only objectionable features. Large numbers of workers were crowded into small rooms. Temperatures were usually high, and were increased in the winter by the heat of numerous lamps. Little time was allowed for meals. Dr.

⁵⁹ *Report of the Massachusetts Legislative Committee, investigating the Ten Hour Law, House Doc. 2633, April 30, 1850 (Mass. State Arch.).*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ *Ibid.*

Josiah Curtis, in a *Report* to the American Medical Association in 1849 said:

There is not a State's Prison or House of Correction in New England where the hours of labor are so long, the hours for meals so short or the ventilation so much neglected, as in all the cotton mills with which I am acquainted.⁶⁴

The refusal of an insurance company to accept business from Lowell demonstrates the strain of the mills upon the workers' health. The Norfolk County Health Insurance Company instructed an agent to refuse business in this letter:

We have determined not to take any more applications from Lowell, especially from the Factories. Such places have been the graves of other companies, and we mean to avoid them. From what policies we have there, we are constantly receiving claims. Doubtless there are many good subjects there, but from past experience it would seem they are not more than a grain of wheat to a bushel of chaff — we can't distinguish them.⁶⁵

VI

In July, 1851, Bishop Fitzpatrick entered into a short controversy with the editor of *The Daily Advertiser*. The editor published an editorial commenting on certain statistics concerning the consumption of liquor in Ireland. The amount consumed was sufficient, he felt, to account in great part for the high mortality rate in that country. Then he proceeded to assert that another cause of the numerous deaths was the idleness of the Irish, "which is fostered and encouraged by the numerous holidays which they regard as a part of their religion." Observance of these in the United States, he claimed, caused Irish laborers on public works to suffer a loss of nearly a quarter of their working hours and a lowering of their wages. This, together with the expense of entertaining themselves during the holiday, "accounts sufficiently for any degree of poverty and wretchedness among people of the same class in their native country. . . . Indeed, the same habits produce

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

the same results of poverty, sickness, and death after their emigration to this country. . . ." ⁶⁶

The Bishop immediately took exception to this statement in a letter to the editor. He did this because he felt the assertion that the observance of holy days was the cause of the loss of many days of labor might influence contractors to avoid hiring Irish laborers whenever they could.⁶⁷ In his first letter he simply stated that the Catholic Church in the United States celebrated only eight holy days, besides Sunday, and of these eight, only one, the feast of Christmas was universally kept. Strict attention to the other seven was not demanded if an injury would result from their observance to Catholics or those who employed them.

As for the charge that high mortality amongst the Irish was traceable to excessive drinking, he continued:

The figures which furnish grounds for this conclusion are taken from newspapers; and newspapers, as we have seen, even with a good will, are sometimes incorrect. More especially (and I think I may say it without any party feeling) English and protestant papers are sometimes incorrect in their statement of Irish and Catholic affairs.⁶⁸

The editor's answer showed that he had been guilty of making statements that had little foundation. The liquor question became a minor issue. The accusation that holy days were a detriment to the efficiency of labor was now qualified. In his first editorial he had made the unqualified statement that holy days took the men away from their work. Now he had to claim that he had been misunderstood and that the chief factor delaying public work construction was not holy days, but bad weather. And even then he had to give ground and admit he had no factual knowledge, but only an impression that work was deserted for religious services.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ *Boston Daily Advertiser*, July 22, 1851.

⁶⁷ Bishop Fitzpatrick to the *Daily Advertiser*, July 28, 1851 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁶⁸ *Boston Daily Advertiser*, July 24, 1851. The letter is signed A Catholic Citizen.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

Bishop Fitzpatrick now proceeded to demolish his opponent's arguments completely. This second letter so thoroughly demonstrated the spuriousness of *The Advertiser's* claims that the paper did not give him the courtesy of publishing or answering it. The Bishop wrote:

It was not an intention of mine to gainsay or criticize that which you meant to be understood as saying, but only that which you certainly did say. Now you did say, so far as I can understand language, that the laborers on many of the public works lost an average of a quarter part of their time in consequence of the holydays regarded as part of their religion and enjoined by the exhortation of the Catholic clergy. But on the 24th you acknowledge that, in the instance to which you refer, "The greatest amount of loss was doubtless in consequence of foul weather." This admission on your part sets aside the greater portion of the whole matter in question and leaves only the smaller portion open to discussion.

But even as to this smaller portion allow me to tell you, with all due respect, that you are still in error. I have never had charge of public work, as you have, in a distant state or monthly payrolls of the laborers. But, without this advantage, I can assure you that I have, from another source, means of knowing the truth in this matter quite as well, if not better, than those who have charge or who keep such rolls. Contractors and subcontractors, accounting to the person in charge for their tardiness in completing a work "which it was expedient to press with all expedition practicable," may have said, "These Catholic priests take the laborers from the work a quarter of the time," but, believe me, sir, if they have said so it was only a form of excuse not founded in reality, a manner of speech not to be taken to the letter, and if you have taken it to the letter, you have been deceived.

Not only was Bishop Fitzpatrick ready to defend Catholic laborers; he also had the courage and wisdom to condemn laboring groups whose activities marked them as lawless and unprincipled. The incident of the Shamrock Society in Worcester has already been discussed. Similar Shamrock organizations, totally at variance with another society bearing the

same name, existed amongst railroad workers in New England, New York, and in other places.⁷⁰ "This society," said the Bishop, "has been the root of much evil. It has been found at the bottom of many disturbances, conspiracies, feuds, riots, etc. And which unfortunately . . . have from time to time been the cause of bloodshed amongst our people, brought disgrace upon the Irish as a nation, and scandal upon our religion."⁷¹ He interdicted the organizations, as did other bishops, and ordered his priests to inform the people they could have no connection with them. If they refused to obey, they were to be deprived of the Sacraments.⁷²

⁷⁰ Bishop Fitzpatrick to P. Murray, undated (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² *Ibid.* Cf. also J. Noonan to Bishop Fitzpatrick, Feb. 6, 1851 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

CHAPTER V

ADDITION, MULTIPLICATION, DIVISION — I

I

THE BOSTON CHURCHES

A GREAT NUMBER of the newly arrived immigrants found homes in the Fort Hill section where many of their countrymen already lived. This caused a general exodus of the American residents, and within a short space of time so few were left that it became impossible to support a Unitarian church on Purchase Street just to the west of Pearl Street. The trustees, therefore, decided to sell the property. Andrew Carney had been commissioned by the Bishop to look for a place that could be converted into a church to take care of the new arrivals and he began negotiations to purchase this meeting-house. After some inquiries he found that it could be bought for thirty thousand dollars. When the Bishop learned this, he attempted to negotiate a loan from several of the city banks, but was unable to obtain one. Finally, in some way or other, he did manage to raise ten thousand dollars, and Carney was directed to close the bargain.¹ Because of the prejudice against Catholics that existed, strangely enough, amongst at least some of the Unitarians, it was necessary to conceal the fact that Carney was acting for the Church. The Bishop likewise had Carney insert a clause in the bond of sale stipulating that non-fulfillment by either party would involve the forfeiture of ten thousand dollars, in order to stop any refusal of the trustees to pass the final papers when they learned who the actual purchasers were. This latter act proved to be very wise, since, as soon as it became known that Catholics were to buy the church, several of the trustees did reject the sale, and tried to escape from the bargain

¹ *Memoranda*, April 4, 1848.

by offering to pay three thousand dollars for cancellation of the bond. The Bishop would not agree to this proposal, held them to their bargain, and they, rather than lose ten thousand dollars, finally signed over the property.²

This church, which was named after St. Vincent de Paul, was opened on Sunday, May 14, 1848; Father Nicholas J. A. O'Brien sang the first Mass, and the Bishop preached.³ Father John J. Doherty was the first pastor.

Meanwhile, the Irish were moving rapidly into other parts of the city, and a Chapel of the Holy Family was established in a hall at 561 Washington Street. Although primarily intended for catechism classes, Mass was celebrated here for the adults of the South Cove section. This was the beginning of St. James' parish. By 1850 this congregation had outgrown the hall, and Dr. Manahan hired the Beach Street Museum for Sunday services. Although it could accommodate sixteen hundred people, the Museum was within a few years too small to hold the great crowds that came to services, and the Bishop decided to build a church in this district. A meeting was held in the Museum on the afternoon of Sunday, September 5, 1852, and the Bishop organized a group of collectors. It was their duty to visit families throughout the city and secure contributions to the building fund. Each contributor was to pay twelve and one half cents a month.⁴

In February, 1853, the Bishop acquired at auction a lot of land bounded by Albany, Harvard, and Lincoln Streets;⁵ on February 20, 1853, at a meeting of the Catholics of the South Cove section, he informed them of this purchase, and, in response to an appeal, about one hundred and seventy-five people subscribed sixteen hundred dollars. This, together with eighteen hundred dollars that the Bishop raised, paid a little more than one quarter of the purchase price of the land.⁶

On Sunday, April 3, 1853, the Museum, which up to that time had been used only on Sundays, was opened for regular

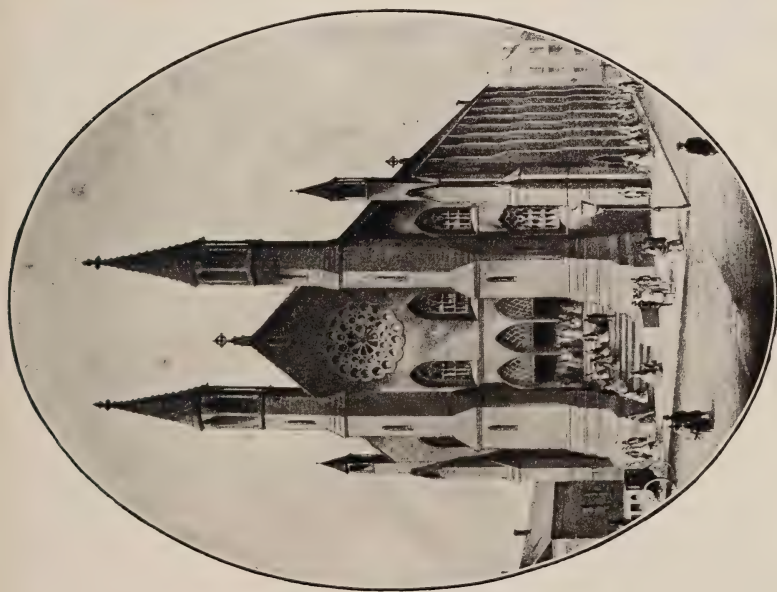
² *Ibid.*, May 1, 1848.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Sept. 5, 1852.

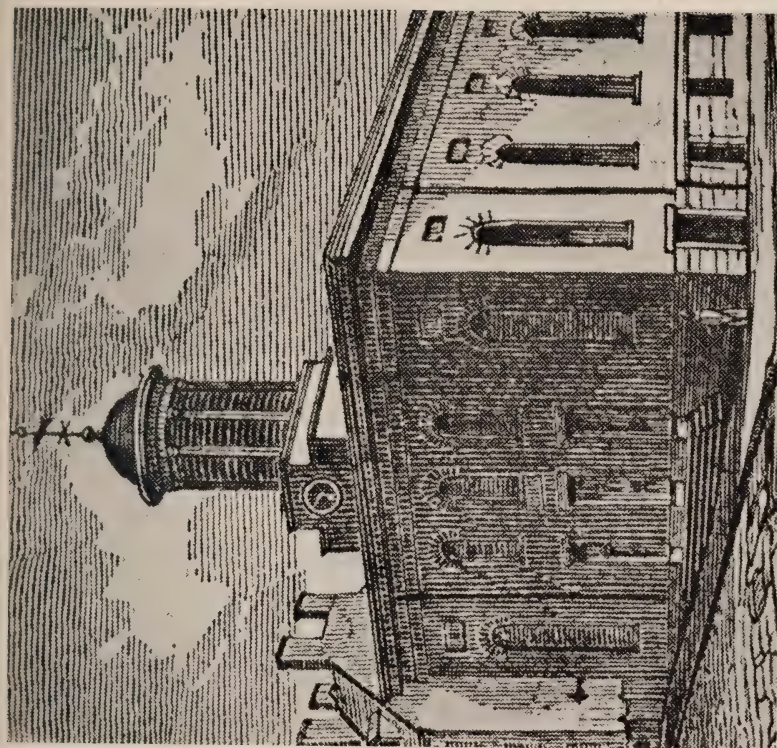
⁶ *Ibid.*, Feb. 20, 1853.

³ *Ibid.*, May 14, 1848.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Feb. 18, 1853.



ST. JAMES' CHURCH, ALBANY STREET, BOSTON



ST. VINCENT'S CHURCH, PURCHASE STREET, BOSTON

services each week day; Father David Walsh was placed in charge,⁷ and was also entrusted with the task of building the new church.

By September, 1855, the new edifice was ready for occupancy. It was a very plain, substantial, even massive, brick building, designed in a modified Gothic style. Planned for the accommodation of a very large and constantly growing congregation, which did not number less than ten thousand souls, and within a few years was expected to be fifteen thousand at least, it gave every appearance of fitting perfectly into this purpose.⁸ The interior, in contrast to the exterior, was quite impressive, although correct architectural principles would have decided against deep galleries for a church of its type. P. C. Keeley, the architect, had managed, however, to conform to this need of the congregation, and had used his skill and genius to make them harmonize with the fine proportions of the edifice. The roof timbers had not been concealed, and, although very strong and massive, gave the impression of lightness and grace. The wall decorations of blue paneling and gold tracery were considered to be unsurpassed by any church in the country. Over the altar, in conformity with rubrical requirements, a highly ornamented and carved canopy was erected. In a word, in its day St. James' was one of the finest Catholic churches in the country, and it certainly was a triumph for a Bishop who only seven years before could scarcely raise ten thousand dollars to make the first payments on the Purchase Street church.

Bishop Fitzpatrick dedicated St. James' Church on September 23, 1855,⁹ conducting a ceremony that was witnessed by a great crowd of people from all parts of Boston. Despite the fact that these were the explosive days of the Know-Nothings, a public procession was held from the rectory to and around the church. The dedication having been completed, the Bishop sang a solemn pontifical Mass, assisted by Father Fitton, as assistant priest, Father Williams and Father Blenkinsop, S.J., as deacons of honor, and Fathers Lyndon and Roche as ministers of the Mass.

⁷ *Ibid.*, April 3, 1853.

⁸ *Pilot*, Sept. 29, 1855.

⁹ *Ibid.*

The commercial growth of the city brought many changes to the vicinity of the Cathedral, and this old centre of Catholicity was finally isolated amidst business establishments, and with only a few families in its congregation, most having moved to other parts of the city. In 1857 an extension of Devonshire Street through Theatre Alley and apparently across the Cathedral lands in the direction of Summer Street was proposed, and it became apparent that the old structure would sooner or later have to be abandoned.

Already, part of the property had been sold to William Pierce. This was the land on which had been situated the first convent of the Ursuline Nuns. When they had removed to Charlestown, Bishop Fenwick bought the house from them, and it was used, at least in Bishop Fitzpatrick's time, as a residence for some of the priests stationed at the Cathedral.¹⁰ On March 28, 1857, William Jeffries, a real estate broker, called on the Bishop and proposed to purchase the Cathedral site. This proposition the Bishop at first declined to consider, but Jeffries pressed the point, and the Bishop finally agreed to allow him the first opportunity to buy after he had determined a price.¹¹

The principal argument used by Jeffries in urging the sale was the Devonshire Street extension, but when this was actually constructed it did not go through the Cathedral site, but turned slightly to the north away from it, and even left a small plot of ground which was added to the Holy Cross property. Yet the Bishop had become convinced that he would have to move; the roar of the traffic, the dwindling congregation, and the physical deterioration of the building all pointed to this. And so, two years later, he commenced the steps that would lead to the abandonment of this early foundation of diocesan Catholicity.

Of Jeffries' offer, nothing more can be learned; the next mention of a sale was a proposal made by the Bishop through George F. Bryant to sell the land to Isaac Rich for \$130,000.¹² This took place on September 13, 1859, and by September 23rd, Rich had accepted.

¹⁰ *Memoranda*, Dec. 20, 1853.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, March 28, 1857.

¹² *Ibid.*, Sept. 23, 1859.

The transfer was not easy. The title to the site was held in trust originally, and there was question of the succession of the holders in trust from Archbishop Carroll, of Baltimore, through Bishops Cheverus and Fenwick. The negotiations dragged along through the courts "in a very perplexing and troublesome manner" for some time, but were finally settled, and on September 13, 1860, the Bishop signed and delivered the deeds to Rich, and received from him a check for \$120,000.¹³ From this sum, which was ten thousand dollars less than was asked originally, five thousand dollars had to be deducted and turned over to the City in payment for the land gained from the Devonshire Street extension.

Three days after the sale, the last services were held in the Cathedral. The Bishop celebrated a solemn pontifical Mass, and at his side, as assistant priest, stood the oldest priest in the Diocese, Father James Fitton. The life of this venerable priest was closely associated with the Cathedral, for he had been baptized, confirmed, and ordained within its walls. On that day the Bishop was so overcome with emotion that he could not speak, and Father James Healy had to read for him the last sermon that was ever preached within these walls.

Meanwhile, the Bishop had been seeking a new location, and he finally decided to buy the Williams homestead on the corner of Washington and Malden Streets. His health, however, failed before the negotiations were completed, and he was forced to go to the Adirondacks for a rest. During his absence Andrew Carney, who had not been consulted in the matter, took things into his own hands and purchased the land for fifty-seven thousand dollars, a sum two thousand dollars in excess of what the Bishop had agreed to pay. There was no loss to the Church, however, since Carney agreed to make up the additional sum out of his own funds.¹⁴ This piece of property was rounded out by the acquisition of the adjoining Weld estate and several other small parcels.

After the Cathedral was closed, services were held for the people on Sundays in the Melodeon on Washington Street, the

¹³ *Ibid.*, Sept. 13, 1860.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Oct. 24, 1860.

rectory was transferred to 9 South Street, while a large hall on Beach Street was used for a Sunday school.

These arrangements were only temporary, since the Bishop intended to start immediately on the new Cathedral. P. C. Keeley had already been commissioned to draw up plans, and by January, 1861, he had completed and had submitted the ground plans for the new structure.¹⁵ But the Civil War intervened; money became scarce, the Bishop's health failed completely, he was forced to go to Europe for a complete rest in May, 1862, and plans for building had to be indefinitely postponed. Steps were then taken to place Boston affairs on a more permanent basis. The Vicar-General, Father Williams, acting on the orders of Bishop Fitzpatrick, purchased a Unitarian church that stood on the corner of Washington and Castle Streets, and this was converted into a Pro-Cathedral.¹⁶

At the same time the Twelfth Congregational Church in Chambers Street was purchased. Father Williams dedicated it to St. Joseph on November 9, 1862.¹⁷

In the purchase of this church opposition to Catholicism was manifested again and an attempt was made to prevent its sale to the Catholics. In this case the committee in charge of selling the building, when approached by agents of the Bishop, tried to avoid the sale by making several endeavors to reëstablish the congregation. When they failed, they hit on the ingenious plan of raising fifteen thousand dollars among the people of the neighborhood, and sought an appropriation of ten thousand dollars from the City, with the idea of turning the site into a park. The effort failed, and the church became one of the four Protestant edifices in Boston that were taken over by the Diocese during Bishop Fitzpatrick's time.¹⁸

The purchase of these churches caused a great deal of comment in Boston, and some were quite certain the Bishop had

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Jan. 23, 25, 1861.

¹⁶ Rev. Sherwood Healy, "History of the Cathedral of Boston"; a series of articles that ran in *The Cathedral* from Nov. 18 to Dec. 16, 1874; this appears in Article IV.

¹⁷ *Father Hilary Tucker's Diary*, Nov. 8, 1862 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

¹⁸ *Pilot*, June 21, 1862.

struck some secret, but fabulous, source of wealth. Writing to the Bishop, while he was in Europe vainly seeking to recover his health, Andrew Carney jestingly told him:

Now My Dear Friend let me indulge in a little gossip, since you left, the gentlemen that represent you have been playing the duce with us all, we wake up in the morning and hear of two or three Churches that have been bought by the Catholics — the enquiry was how they could pay for them — many would say the Bishop is out in France and Italy raising funds for them, some say he got \$300,000 others say you must look out for these Catholics they are getting too rich and powerful, there is some trick in this, that Bishop is a shrewd man — it is said by many influential men here and I am beginning to believe it myself the Bishop has got a promise of over a Million dollars. I know you were always great at finances and good mercantile shrewdness.¹⁹

But there was no mystery to the Bishop's source of wealth; it was simply the generosity of the Irish, and the Bishop acknowledged the Diocese's debt to them when he replied to Carney:

I do not wonder that I appear strange to our protestant friends. They do not know what a rich mine there is in the faith, piety and zeal of our good Irish Catholics. In fact there is no people to whom the Church is so much indebted and the world offers nothing in comparison to their generosity.²⁰

These two churches having been purchased, two new parishes were created. St. Joseph's was placed under Father Bernard O'Reilly. The Cathedral parish was established in the South End.

At the same time St. John's Church on Moon Street was abandoned, and the New North Church at the corner of Hanover and Clark Streets was secured. Formerly a capital of Unitarianism in Boston, the New North Church was completely

¹⁹ Andrew Carney to Bishop Fitzpatrick, Jan. 19, 1864 (*Papers of Miss Louise E. Reggio*).

²⁰ Bishop Fitzpatrick to Andrew Carney, Feb. 25, 1864 (*Papers of Miss Louise E. Reggio*).

isolated after the immigrant flood had swept into that part of the city. This church was dedicated to St. Stephen by Father Williams on December 2, 1862.²¹

Meanwhile, other changes had taken place in Boston. The dispute at St. Mary's was brought to an end by the appointment of Father Patrick Flood to take charge of the parish. The troubled affairs of Waltham, however, called for a diplomatic priest to settle them, and in the early part of 1847, Bishop Fitzpatrick found it necessary to send Father Flood to that town and transfer Father Strain to St. Mary's. But this arrangement was to be only temporary, since the Bishop was then seeking to turn the parish over to the Jesuits.

In doing this he had in mind the establishment of a day-college — a project Bishop Fenwick considered, but never acted on.²² His successor lost no time in initiating steps to bring this about, and the installation of the Jesuits at St. Mary's was to be the first move. By August, 1847, the Jesuits had accepted the tender of the parish, and it was agreed that Father John McElroy, for whom the Bishop had the highest regard, should be placed in charge.²³

Father McElroy began his career in Boston by giving a retreat to the priests of the Diocese.²⁴ This retreat, which was the second of such exercises for the clergy of the Boston Diocese, was held in the Cathedral. Forty-three priests came in from the missions of the various States, took up residence at the Bishop's house, and labored with exactitude and piety to refresh and augment their virtue and zeal. The retreat closed with a solemn pontifical Mass, and afterwards the Bishop announced to the clergy that the Jesuits were to have St. Mary's.

²¹ *Father Hilary Tucker's Diary*, notes for Oct., 1862, and Dec. 2, 1862 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

²² Father W. F. Clark, S.J., to Father S. Barber, S.J., May 11, 1845 (*Fordham Arch.*, 215 W 1); Father McElroy, S.J., to Bishop Blanc, Dec. 17, 1847 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

²³ Father Verhaegen, S.J., to Father McElroy, S.J., Dec. 4, 1846 (*Fordham Arch.*, 215 M 5); Bishop Fitzpatrick to Father Verhaegen, S.J., July 27, 1847 (*ibid.*, 215 F 2); Father Verhaegen, S.J., to Father McElroy, S.J., Aug. 4, 1847 (*ibid.*, 215 F 4).

²⁴ Bishop Fitzpatrick to Father Verhaegen, S.J., July 27, 1847 (*ibid.*, 215 F 2).

On Sunday, October 31, 1847, the Bishop opened the career of the Society of Jesus in Boston when he went with Father McElroy to St. Mary's Church and introduced him to the people. Stationed with the new pastor were Father Galligher, S.J., and two lay brothers; Father Kroes, S.J., was also assigned to the parish, but, because of illness, was detained at St. Thomas', Maryland.²⁵

The Bishop was delighted with this establishment; he felt that he had settled the problem of St. Mary's parish and had made a college possible. Replying to a letter of thanks from the Provincial, he wrote:

I scarcely feel that I have any right to the thanks so warmly expressed in your letter received yesterday. I believe that I can say with all truth and sincerity, that the Society has not without its own body, nor perhaps even within, a well-wisher more cordial than myself. So if good wishes can be looked upon as a benefaction I deserve to be upon your list. But in the present instance I believe that I am myself the principal gainer. What I have just done in relation to Saint Mary's Church has been with me a desired object ever since the administration of the Diocese fell into my hands. The arrangements as they now stand are unquestionably a blessing for the Catholics of Boston, while they afford me much relief and peace of mind. So in turn, I must request you, Very Revd. Sir, to accept also my sincere thanks.

The measures taken already in relation to the Society, are, as you are aware, only initiatory. Our ultimate plan is to have a College in the City. But this plan is too large a one to be executed all at once. Situated as we are, and limited in our resources we can only make small beginnings trusting for the rest in Him who alone can give the increase in all things undertaken for His glory. If we had waited until we should see a college starting at once into existence it would have been the "Rusticus expectat" idea with us.²⁶

²⁵ *Memoranda*, Oct. 30, 1847; Father McElroy, S.J., to Bishop Blanc, Dec. 17, 1847 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

²⁶ Bishop Fitzpatrick to Father Verhaegen, S.J., Nov. 9, 1847 (*Fordham Arch.*, 215 D 11).

By 1851, Father McElroy had begun to plan for a new church in the West End which would afford accommodations for his numerous parishioners, and at the same time would be a source of support for the contemplated college.²⁷

At that time the City of Boston had just opened a new jail at the corner of Cambridge and Charles Streets, and was seeking to dispose of the old site on Leverett Street.²⁸ Apparently Father McElroy heard of this and tried to purchase the property, but the City would not sell to him when the Committee on Public Lands learned that he intended to erect a Catholic church.²⁹ The land was finally bought by J. L. C. Amee,³⁰ who offered to sell part of his purchase to Father McElroy. But Father McElroy rejected the proposition when he discovered that he could not obtain a piece of land wide enough for a church.³¹

Although the City was not willing to sell the jail lands to the Catholics, it was able to reverse its position when it came to getting rid of an abandoned school building, and Father McElroy bought the Otis schoolhouse on Lancaster Street. This building was situated on a triangular piece of land bounded by Lancaster, Merrimac, and Commercial Streets, and the apex of the triangle formed by Merrimac and Commercial Streets was directly adjacent to the jail land site.³² The Otis schoolhouse was bought at the suggestion of Bishop Fitzpatrick, who proposed to Father McElroy on March 6, 1852, that he secure either this building or the Endicott schoolhouse.³³ The Bishop pointed out that this would be a thoroughly sound step since

²⁷ Father McElroy, S.J., to Father Brocard, S.J., July 17, 1851 (*ibid.*, 219 S 9 A).

²⁸ *Report of the Joint Committee on Public Lands*, April 28, 1853, *City Doc.* 32, pp. 7, 8 (*Boston City Arch.*).

²⁹ Father McElroy, S.J., to Father Brocard, S.J., July 17, 1851 (*Fordham Arch.*, 219 S 9 A); J. L. C. Amee to the City of Boston, May 12, 1853 (*Boston City Arch.*).

³⁰ *Report of the Joint Committee on Public Lands*, *op. cit.*, pp. 8, 9 (*Boston City Arch.*).

³¹ J. L. C. Amee to the City of Boston, *loc. cit.*; *Report of the Joint Committee on Public Lands*, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

³² *A New and Complete Map of the City of Boston*, published by Nathl. Dearborn, 1846.

³³ *Memoranda*, March 6, 1852.

classes could be held during the week and the hall could be used as a chapel on Sundays. There was a large hall in the upper story of this building capable of accommodating six to seven hundred people; this was remodeled into a chapel and was solemnly blessed by the Bishop on September 19, 1852.³⁴

Having made this purchase, Father McElroy decided that it would be a suitable site for a college, and he commenced negotiations to buy adjoining properties; but having failed after nine months to persuade the owners to sell,³⁵ he again sought to buy the jail lands.

By this time General Amee had found that he could not comply with certain conditions in regard to the use of the land which had been imposed on him by the City. This meant that he would forfeit the land. Seeking to escape this, he went to Dexter E. Wadleigh, to whom he was already in debt, and proposed that he should buy this land and build dwellings. Wadleigh was willing to take the lots, but he demanded that Amee should have some of the restrictions rescinded.³⁶

Amee, complying with Wadleigh's wishes, petitioned the City Council on February 17, 1853, for a change in the conditions of his contract relating to the time limit and the kind of buildings that could be erected. This petition was granted on March 9th.³⁷

Some time between the abandonment of the Lancaster Street project, which took place about February 26, 1853, and the grant of this change in restrictions, Father McElroy again opened negotiations for the jail lands, having made up his mind that it would be a suitable site despite its lack of depth. He did not, however, make any agreement to purchase until he had seen a certified copy of the Common Council's decisions and had consulted a lawyer.³⁸ Amee, having received an attested

³⁴ *Ibid.*, Sept. 19, 1852; *Pilot*, Sept. 25, 1852.

³⁵ Father McElroy, S.J., to Father Stonestreet, S.J., Feb. 26, 1853 (*Fordham Arch.*, 221 Z 2).

³⁶ *Report of the Joint Committee on Public Lands, op. cit.*, p. 24.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

³⁸ In a letter to Father Stonestreet, S.J., written from Philadelphia on March 8, 1853 (*Fordham Arch.*, 221 Z 3), Father McElroy mentions that he must return to Boston to conclude the Leverett Street deal. Since he stated definitely in a letter to Mayor Seaver on April 25, 1853 (*City Doc.* 32, pp. 24, 25), that he would

transcript of the Council's vote, took it to Father McElroy; the latter inspected the premises and then consulted Nathaniel Bowditch, who was the best conveyancer in the city.³⁹

At this point in the negotiations Amee told Wadleigh about the change in the plans, and Wadleigh consented to surrender his interest.⁴⁰

On March 23, 1853, Bowditch assured Father McElroy that the restrictions had been changed, and Father McElroy agreed to take the land. It should be noted that he did this with the knowledge that there was a stipulation that only stores and dwelling-houses could be erected on the Leverett Street side of the jail lands, and that in order to build a church from Wall to Leverett Street (which was the only way of getting sufficient depth for a church), he would have to persuade the City to change these conditions.⁴¹

Then a storm, distilled from a mixture of racial prejudice, anti-Catholicism, and political fence-building, broke and raged furiously for several years. The news of the transaction was conveyed to the Committee on Public Lands, a meeting was called, and on the evening of March 24, 1853, the vote of March 9th was revoked. This left Father McElroy in possession of a lot of land on which only dwelling-houses or stores could be erected and which was subject to forfeiture if ten houses were not built on Wall Street within ten days.

The cancellation of Amee's grant by the Committee on Public Lands was followed by a remonstrance from Nathaniel Hammond, who kept a livery stable on Leverett Street, and nine hundred and forty-two others, in which they claimed that their interests had been injured by the removal of the restrictions and

not buy the land until he had seen a certified copy of the changed restrictions and had consulted a lawyer, this letter to Father Stonestreet can only mean that he had made up his mind to buy, but would not conclude the negotiations until he had made sure that the restrictions were changed.

³⁹ Father McElroy, S.J., to Mayor Seaver, April 25, 1853, *City Doc.* 32, pp. 24-25 (*Boston City Arch.*).

⁴⁰ Statement of D. E. Wadleigh, *City Doc.* 32, pp. 25-26 (*Boston City Arch.*).

⁴¹ Argument of Nathaniel I. Bowditch before the Joint Committee on Public Lands, April 16, 1853, *Pilot*, April 30, 1853; Father McElroy, S.J., to Mayor Seaver, April 25, 1853, *City Doc.* 32, pp. 24-25 (*Boston City Arch.*).

requested a hearing on the matter.⁴² While this petition was before the Committee, the Bishop and Father McElroy sent in a request that the restrictions on Leverett Street should be removed so that a church might be erected. In this document they deliberately avoided mentioning the recent action of the Committee in relation to the Wall Street restrictions because of the advice of Bowditch that no court would uphold it.⁴³

In response to Hammond's remonstrance and the Bishop's petition, a hearing was held on April 19, 1853, by the Sub-Committee on the jail lands. The case of the remonstrants was pleaded by Harvey Jewell, who claimed that his clients had managed after many years of effort to get rid of the jail, and now were threatened with another destructive influence in the district — a Catholic Church and an influx of Irish.⁴⁴ Nathaniel Bowditch, without any request from the Bishop and Father McElroy, defended the cause of the Diocese. As an authority on such matters he declared that in the eyes of the law the Catholics had acquired the right to build a church on Wall Street and the City could not rescind the act that allowed them to do this. They now sought for a modification of the restrictions on Leverett Street; if this was not granted, the only motive that could be assigned was that of religious prejudice. How could it be explained in any other way when the City had made a grant for a new Protestant edifice on Shawmut Avenue on December 25, 1851, and had so worded the deed as to make it clear that the aim was to encourage the building of a church? But if this was done for Protestants, then the Catholics had a far greater right and claim to public aid, since they constituted from one third to one half of the population of Boston and had only a few churches to accommodate their growing numbers. And if religious bias was not their motive, but rather personal or social reasons prompted the remonstrants, then it should be remembered that if the Catholics were denied their petition they could still use the jail as a residence for their

⁴² Petition of Nathaniel Hammond, March 28, 1853, *City Doc.* 32, p. 3 (*Boston City Arch.*).

⁴³ *Pilot*, April 30, 1853.

⁴⁴ *Boston Daily Bee*, April 20, 1853; *Boston Daily Courier*, April 20, 1853.

priests and also a school.⁴⁵ Thus, the presence of Catholics and Irish could not be escaped.

The Sub-Committee's Report was given to the Committee on Public Lands, and a decision was announced on May 17, 1853. Amee was charged with false representations and was made the scapegoat for the affair. But they were forced to recognize that the law was on the Church's side, and they recommended that Father McElroy should be given a deed consistent with the terms under which he had bought the jail lands. As for the Leverett Street lots, the Committee sought refuge in the specious plea that a virtual pledge had been given to owners of estates in the vicinity that nothing but dwelling-houses or stores would be erected there, and therefore the petition should be denied.⁴⁶

It is interesting to note that Councilman Bonney, who had presented Hammond's remonstrance, made a proposal that was finally followed in solving the jail lands case. Seeking, as he said, "strict justice and impartiality," he suggested that the lands should be conveyed back to the City, and in return the Bishop and Father McElroy should be paid all the money they had given to the City, together with a sum for expenses and damages.⁴⁷ This suggestion was rejected.

By this time the liberal citizens of Boston had taken an interest in the case, and Rufus Choate, Abbott Lawrence, William Appleton, Amos Lawrence, Edward Everett, and a number of other very prominent men sent a memorial to the City Council asking them to remove all restrictions from the jail lands so that a church could be erected.⁴⁸

This was followed by a very vigorous protest and petition from the Bishop, in which he stated that if a church was refused, the people living in the vicinity would not escape the embarrassment of having the Irish in their midst, for tenements, at least, could be built for them to live in.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ *Pilot*, loc. cit.

⁴⁶ *City Doc.* 39, pp. 3, 4 (*Boston City Arch.*).

⁴⁷ *City Doc.* 39, p. 6 (*ibid.*).

⁴⁸ Rufus Choate and twenty-four others to the City Council, undated, but marked as received by the Common Council on May 19, 1853. *City Doc.* 40, p. 6 (*ibid.*).

⁴⁹ Bishop John B. Fitzpatrick for self, and Father John McElroy, now absent from the city, to the City Council, May 19, 1853. *City Doc.* 40, pp. 3-5 (*ibid.*).

These two letters, and especially the Bishop's, somewhat jarred some of the City officials out of the smug position which they thought they had secured for themselves. They now awoke to the fact that influential men were disgusted with their paltry artifices, and that, in seeking to escape the accusation of saddling the despised Irish on the district, they were actually going to make possible their residence in that section. It was a very awkward situation for a politician who was trying to ride with both the anti-Catholic vote and the Irish ballots. The Committee on Public Lands once more took up the matter, and this time a division of opinion occurred. Five took refuge in the same old hide-out, and would do nothing to relieve the situation, but Mayor Seaver and Benjamin James decided in favor of the Church. They claimed that they did not consider themselves bound to follow their previous line of reasoning, but felt it was their duty to take into consideration any new views that might be proposed. This had happened, and the question had resolved itself into deciding the — to the Irish — not very complimentary problem whether it was better to have a church built on the location which would be an ornament to the City, or:

. . . that the land should be exclusively covered by dwelling-houses, with a probability that they will be occupied by a population disagreeable and injurious to the neighborhood.⁵⁰

In the elections of December, 1856, the jail lands played an important rôle, and some of the politicians who voted against removal of the restrictions were turned out of office.⁵¹

In March, 1857, the case was again up for consideration; but by this time the Bishop and Father McElroy had decided that the penchant for postponements shown by the City Council and

⁵⁰ *Minority Report, Committee on Public Lands*, May 26, 1853. *City Doc. 40*, pp. 12-13 (*ibid.*).

⁵¹ Father Wiget to Father Stonestreet, Dec. 11, 1856: "This Yankee Bigotry! Last Monday we had the election. All who voted against removing the restrictions were turned out. The whole election turned on the jail lands" (*Fordham Arch.*, 222 W 16). Father McElroy, S.J., to Father Stonestreet, S.J., Dec. 15, 1856: "Prominent Know-Nothings were defeated in the last election. The issue was the jail lands. Last year there were 14 K.N., now only 6" (*ibid.*, 224 W 17).

the Board of Aldermen would again be exhibited, and they concluded that it would be better to sell the jail lands and find another location. After some exploratory walks through the western part of the city they decided that a group of old, ramshackle houses, situated on the corner of Milton and Spring Streets, probably could be bought at a reasonable price.⁵² This site was only a short distance to the north of the jail lands. Probably, however, these walks also acquainted them with the fact that the district was rapidly changing from a residential to a business section, for by March 26, 1857, the Bishop had come to the conclusion that it would be better to seek a site in the southern part of the city.⁵³ He, therefore, authorized the Jesuits to make this change in plans.⁵⁴ Steps were taken to turn the jail lands back to the City, and the authorities agreed to give up all money that had been advanced, together with simple and compound interest, plus the sum of four thousand dollars.⁵⁵ The City authorities were only too glad to get the matter settled, "as it perplexed interested politicians and made them uncertain in their calculations upon the Catholic vote in the Municipal elections."⁵⁶ The Bishop was very well satisfied, for he now saw that the obstinate attitude of the politicians had fortunately delayed matters until it became clear that the trend of population was away from the West End, and a college in the southern part of the city would be much more accessible to students living in South Boston, Roxbury, and adjoining towns.⁵⁷

During the week of May 3rd, Father McElroy asked the City authorities to sell him three acres on Harrison Avenue. The Land Commissioners by a vote of five to five refused the application. When the matter became known, some of the newspapers denounced Father McElroy's request "as an audacious attempt of ecclesiastical authority in the Catholic Church to acquire undue and colossal power."⁵⁸ But somebody — and it probably was Mayor Rice — quickly put an end to this rein-

⁵² *Memoranda*, March 23, 1857.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, March 26, 1857.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, April 20, 1857.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, May 3, 1857; *Pilot*, May 16, 1857.

vigorated nonsense, and by August the deal had been completed.⁵⁹

The cornerstone of the new church was laid on April 27, 1858;⁶⁰ and a chapel for the accommodation of people living in the vicinity was opened in the College building on October 2, 1859.⁶¹ On March 10, 1861, the persevering efforts of the venerable Father McElroy were completed, and the new Immaculate Conception Church was dedicated. It was the finest and most beautiful church in the Diocese. Once again the grand ceremonies that had marked the opening of SS. Peter and Paul's, St. Joseph's, and St. Francis de Sales' Churches were repeated, but on a larger and more magnificent scale. Early in the morning the three altars were consecrated by the Bishops of Newark, Brooklyn, and Hartford. The ceremony of blessing the church began at ten o'clock. There was a procession of fifty Jesuit scholastics, twenty priests, and behind them Bishops McCloskey, of Albany, Bayley, of Newark, Loughlin, of Brooklyn, McFarland, of Hartford, Archbishop Hughes, of New York, and finally the Bishop of Boston. The ceremony of blessing the church was fittingly carried out by the one whose plans and ambitions had been responsible for its erection, Bishop Fitzpatrick. After this he celebrated the solemn pontifical Mass, and Archbishop Hughes preached the sermon.⁶²

The career of Father McElroy in Boston came to an end on October 30, 1864. For years he had proved that the confidence of the Bishop in his ability to carry out the work entrusted to him had not been misplaced, and that the sharp protest raised by the Bishop when the Provincial wished to remove him in 1848 was fully justified by the results he produced.⁶³ But the labors of his many years in Boston had taken their toll, old age and its infirmities had crept upon him, and it became necessary to place less exacting burdens on his still able shoulders. On Sunday, October 30th, one of his brethren stood in the pulpit

⁵⁹ *Woodstock Letters*, XXVII (1898), pp. 92 *et seq.*

⁶⁰ *Pilot*, March 9, 1861.

⁶¹ *Memoranda*, Oct. 2, 1859.

⁶² *Ibid.*, March 10, 1861.

⁶³ Bishop Fitzpatrick to Father Brocard, S.J., Jan. 4, 1849 (*Fordham Arch.*, 217 Z 6).

of the Immaculate Conception Church and read a farewell letter to the people. For his flock he had only priestly affection; for his Bishop a simple, dignified gratitude for his kindness and advice; and for the people of Boston and Massachusetts, who had at times so severely tried him, no bitterness or reproach. He left, he told the people: "to retire to another residence where he will be without particular charge or duty, and thus be enabled, by God's grace, to make a more immediate preparation for his departure out of this world."⁶⁴

The trouble at Holy Trinity, which had started in Bishop Fenwick's time, disturbed for many years the peace of the German Catholics. If Bishop Fenwick's successor had any hope that it was finally settled after he had dedicated a new church on October 25, 1846,⁶⁵ he soon found he was mistaken. Father Alexander Martini was the pastor at the time, and, soon after the new church was opened, he became involved in a dispute with the parishioners that was so bitter that the Bishop finally threatened to close the church and sell it. Father Martini gave up his charge and the church was closed. An insurgent movement then sprang up amongst some of the radicals, who threatened to use force, if necessary, to open the church. Fortunately, what might have proved to be an outright scandal was avoided by the arrival of Father Gustavus Eck, S.J., to take charge of the congregation (August, 1848).⁶⁶

In a short time he became one of the outstanding priests of the Diocese. Untiring in his care for souls and a talented preacher, he revived the people of the parish and substituted piety and charity for dissention. Yet he was inclined to be too self-reliant and confident as to what he could accomplish; these characteristics marred and destroyed what would otherwise have been a notable career.

No sooner had order been brought into the congregation than Father Eck began to plan for a new church, a monument to the Immaculate Conception.⁶⁷ The Bishop and Father Mc-

⁶⁴ *Pilot*, Nov. 12, 1864.

⁶⁵ *Memoranda*, Oct. 25, 1846.

⁶⁶ *Woodstock Letters*, XVI (1887), 260-265; *Memoranda*, March 19, 1848.

⁶⁷ Father Eck, S.J., to Father Stonestreet, S.J., Feb. 5, 1853 (*Fordham Arch.*, 221 F 1).

Elroy warned him against the idea and pointed out that the debt on the old property should first be paid, but he gave no heed to them.⁶⁸ To give him due credit, it must be said that, within reasonable limits, his plan was sound enough. He had persuaded the Bishop to agree to buy the old church property for twenty-two thousand dollars when the new church was completed; part of this money he planned to use to pay off the old debt, the remaining sum to be applied to the new church. Where he failed was in not realizing that he could not secure additional funds to meet the expenses of construction. Moreover, he became involved in a perfect tangle of conflicting claims when he made himself a depository for the savings of the people, with the understanding that he could use the money to build the church, paying interest to the depositors in return.

Seeking his objective, he went ahead and bought land from the City on Tremont Street and commenced preparations to build. The Bishop protested, and even refused to have the land deeded to the Diocese. Then, early in 1854, the Bishop went to Europe, and when he had departed, Father Eck called in the builders and signed his contracts.

It probably seems somewhat strange that a priest would act contrary to the Bishop's orders, but the explanation is to be found in a custom of the times. Many priests built churches that did not please the Bishop, especially when they were very elaborate and expensive affairs; but the fact is that during the period of construction, and even after they were in use for some time, these churches were not diocesan property, and, therefore, the Diocese was not responsible for their tremendous debts. They actually belonged to the pastor and the people. This was true of Father Eck's project.

The good priest did not make much progress; the worry and exertion overtaxed his strength, the realization that he could not pay the contractor undermined his health, and he was stricken with paralysis. Things were in this state when the Bishop returned from Europe at the end of the year. After considering the situation, he informed the builder that, since

⁶⁸ *Memoranda*, March 21, 1855.

he had no connection with the affair, he could not be looked to for payment. The contractor immediately stopped construction operations.

Father Eck was crushed by his mistake and left for Europe, and Father Reiter, S.J., took his place. He was the ideal man to save the Germans from their predicament, but at that time he was not allowed to stay very long, and two other Jesuits, Fathers Cattani and Steinbacher, followed him. They were not able to accomplish anything.

During this period the congregation endeavored to replace the Jesuits with Redemptorists. Late in 1855, a committee made such a proposal to the Bishop and he gave his assent. The trustees went to Baltimore, interviewed the Provincial of the Redemptorists, and he sent two priests to Boston to interview the Bishop. This took place in April, 1856. They seemed to be satisfied with their investigations, but the Congregation did not have sufficient men to supply the necessary number of priests, and the Provincial decided not to accept the offer.⁶⁹

A last attempt was made to meet the pressure of creditors by seeking an extension of the time limit of the City of Boston's lien on the land. This petition was granted.⁷⁰ The money that was due to the builder, Nelson Curtis, could not be raised, however, and the congregation was forced to face the drastic solution of surrendering the property. A meeting was held on November 18, 1856, at which the Bishop and the builder were present.⁷¹ Curtis made several reasonable offers, and it was agreed that he should take possession of the lot and materials that were stored on it, pay off the claims of the City, and receive a mortgage on the rectory for twenty-four hundred dollars, to satisfy the remaining debt. The committee could do nothing else but accept, and the property passed to Nelson Curtis.

Father Reiter returned to Holy Trinity, January 22, 1859.

⁶⁹ Bishop Fitzpatrick to the Superior of St. Alphonsus Convent, Baltimore, Md., March 27, 1856 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*); *Memoranda*, April 7, 8, 9, 1856; Superior of the Redemptorists to Bishop Fitzpatrick, March 13, 1856 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*); Jesuit correspondence about the German church (*Fordham Arch.*, 1856).

⁷⁰ *Boston City Arch.*, 1856.

⁷¹ *Memoranda*, Nov. 18, 22, 1856.

He was a man of tremendous energy, willing to use patience in seeking his objective and capable of injecting new life into the discouraged congregation. In five years he produced astonishing results. The money deposited with Father Eck by the people was repaid, many improvements on the old church were made, and new property was acquired. Under his guidance the parish prospered; and he accomplished by steady perseverance what Father Eck in his enthusiasm had failed to do.

It should be noted that the pastors of Holy Trinity Church were accustomed to visit and administer to Germans in all parts of the Diocese.⁷²

II

THE ST. JOSEPH'S, ROXBURY MISSION CENTRE

The South End section of Boston had been served for a decade from the unpretentious brick church on Northampton Street known as St. Patrick's. In 1845 a division was made and Father P. H. O'Beirne was appointed pastor of Roxbury. He erected St. Joseph's Church; this edifice was opened on August 23, 1846, and was dedicated on December 6, 1846, by the Bishop.⁷³

A very quick increase in the number of Catholics living in Roxbury occurred, and by 1853 so many had come into the district that another church was needed. About 1850 a Baptist meeting-house had been erected on Ruggles Street; this building was sold at auction in 1853, and Father O'Beirne bought it. After the necessary alterations had been made, the Bishop dedicated this new house of worship as the Church of St. Francis de Sales, on June 12, 1853.⁷⁴ Unfortunately, however, on October 24, 1858, the edifice caught fire because of the carelessness of some workmen, and was completely destroyed.⁷⁵

⁷² *Diocesan Yearly Report, 1856, 1859* (Boston Dioc. Arch.).

⁷³ James S. Sullivan, ed., *A Graphic, Historical, and Pictorial Account of the Catholic Church of New England* (Boston and Portland, 1895), p. 146; hereafter cited as *The Catholic Church of New England*.

⁷⁴ *Pilot*, June 18, 1853; Oct. 30, 1858,

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, Oct. 30, 1858.

After this catastrophe the congregation went back to St. Joseph's. In 1860, when the new House of the Angel Guardian was opened on Vernon Street, Father Haskins probably began to plan the erection of a new church. He bought a lot on the north side of Vernon Street, adjoining the House of the Angel Guardian, on April 16, 1860.⁷⁶ In the fall of 1860 a chapel was opened in the House of the Angel Guardian, and on February 2, 1861, the chaplain was given the care of a quasi-parochial district.⁷⁷ The chaplain was Father A. Sherwood Healy, later Vice-President of St. Joseph's Seminary, Troy, New York. Father John Griffin succeeded him on August 2, 1863.⁷⁸ Father Haskins was not satisfied with the site he had purchased for a church, and on August 13, 1863, he bought the lot on which stands the present St. Francis de Sales' Church.⁷⁹

At Dedham, a station of St. Joseph's received from Waltham in 1846, the Catholics attended Mass in Temperance Hall until St. Mary's was built. This church was begun by Father P. O'Beirne in 1855. There must have been some very boisterous winds in those days, for, like the church in Taunton, it was blown down on December 13, 1856, when almost completed.⁸⁰ Another church was begun, and, escaping further unruly breezes, was completed in 1857.⁸¹ At South Dedham (Norwood), also a former station of Waltham, Father O'Beirne bought a small Universalist meeting-house, on April 22, 1863, which was dedicated to St. Catherine.⁸² Walpole was also a station of St. Joseph's.

On July 30, 1852, the first recorded service in Brookline was held in Lyceum Hall.⁸³ The first pastor was Father Michael O'Beirne, who probably was appointed at this time. A lot for a church was purchased on Andem Place, a little alleyway close to the Brookline Village railroad station on November 9, 1852.⁸⁴

⁷⁶ *Norfolk Deeds*, book 286, p. 216.

⁷⁷ Bishop Fitzpatrick to Father O'Beirne, Feb. 2, 1861 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁷⁸ *Clergy Record*, Aug. 5, 1863 (*ibid.*).

⁷⁹ *Norfolk Deeds*, book 316, p. 229.

⁸⁰ *Pilot*, Dec. 20, 1856.

⁸¹ *The Catholic Church of New England*, p. 668.

⁸² *Memoranda*, July 2, 1863; *Norfolk Deeds*, book 315, p. 122.

⁸³ D. Hamilton Hurd, *History of Norfolk County* (Philadelphia, 1884), p. 823.

⁸⁴ *Bishop's Book of Deeds*, Nov. 9, 1852 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

A church was built in 1853, and was opened under the title of Our Lady of the Assumption on September 24, 1854.⁸⁵ Because of ill-health, Father O'Beirne had to go to Europe at the end of 1854, and Father Joseph M. Finotti took charge of this mission as administrator, in January, 1855, serving it from the Cathedral where he was stationed. The church was destroyed by fire on Thanksgiving Day, 1855, and there are accounts of this which say, either that it occurred under suspicious circumstances or that someone hampered the firemen's efforts by cutting the hose.⁸⁶ *The Pilot* gives no account of this, and there is reason to doubt both stories — people were too quick to see an incendiary in every church fire. By 1856 Father Finotti was definitely the pastor.

When Father Finotti went to Brookline, he took with him, as a charge, one of the most extraordinary missions in the Diocese from the point of view of distance at least: this was the mission of Provincetown. While stationed at the Cathedral, he had been assigned by the Bishop to go to this place in August, 1852, and give a mission.⁸⁷ He found about seventy Catholics. This was the first time a Catholic priest had ever been in town, and an Irish Protestant heralded it by trying to arouse the people, and drive him out.⁸⁸ Father Finotti continued his visits, and in December, 1853, he purchased the town high school and converted the schoolroom into a chapel; rooms in the basement were fitted up for the visiting priest.⁸⁹ Provincetown was made a mission of Sandwich in 1857.

Brighton, at the opening of this period, was a station of the Waltham mission. Father Flood, the pastor, bought a lot of land in Brighton on which he intended to build a church in June, 1847, but seems to have done nothing more about this.⁹⁰ When Brookline was made a parish, Brighton became one of its missions. A new church lot was secured on July 30, 1853. This was situated on Bennett Street near Market Street — about a

⁸⁵ *Pilot*, Sept. 30, 1854.

⁸⁶ *The Catholic Church of New England*, p. 170.

⁸⁷ *Memoranda*, Aug. 28, 1852.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ *Diocesan Yearly Report, 1856 (Boston Dioc. Arch.)*.

⁹⁰ *Pilot*, June 5, 1847.

block south of the present church.⁹¹ Meanwhile, Father O'Beirne, and Father Finotti after him, said Mass in a loft over the stable of Chandler, the iceman, on Chestnut Hill Avenue. Many humorous stories are told of this chapel, and the experiences of preachers whose sermons were punctuated by the neighing of horses, barking of dogs, or grunts of the pigs in the stable below.⁹² On October 29, 1855, Father Finotti dug the first earth for the Church of "St. Columba," and on July 1, 1856, the congregation said good-bye to the stable loft and moved into the basement of their little wooden church.⁹³ It was burned down on December 7, 1862, but Father Finotti rebuilt a wooden church on the same site during the next year.⁹⁴

III

THE SOUTH BOSTON MISSION CENTRE

On September 8, 1848, a great misfortune befell the Diocese when SS. Peter and Paul's Church in South Boston was almost completely destroyed by fire, only a portion of the walls remaining intact. The rectory also was badly damaged, and two Protestant churches in the vicinity were set ablaze several times by sparks from the conflagration. Although there was some suspicion that the fire was caused by an incendiary, it was finally shown that it was started by embers that were carried by the wind to the tower from a fire on Sea Street.⁹⁵ The church had cost sixty-five thousand dollars, and up to within two or three weeks of the fire had been insured only for twenty thousand dollars. Fortunately, however, Bishop Fitzpatrick had increased that sum to forty thousand dollars, and the insurance companies, after debating whether to rebuild the church or pay the money, finally agreed on the latter.⁹⁶

During the time of reconstruction, St. Augustine's, which

⁹¹ *Archbishop's Book of Deeds* (Boston Dioc. Arch.).

⁹² Clipping from the *Punch Bowl*, *Memoranda* of Archbishop Williams' time.

⁹³ *Ibid.* ⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ *Pilot*, Sept. 16, 1848; *Memoranda*, Sept. 8, 1848.

⁹⁶ *Memoranda*, Sept. 11, 16, 1848.

had just been repaired, was reopened to accommodate those who lived in the upper end of South Boston, and several halls were hired to accommodate parishioners living in the vicinity of the church.

Rebuilding operations were started immediately, but the lack of financial means hampered the work considerably; there was a debt of about thirty thousand dollars on the property, and by the time the Bishop had finished paying off the creditors, only eight thousand dollars of the insurance money was left.⁹⁷ For this reason reconstruction work proceeded very slowly, and the new church was not completed until 1853.

The pastor, Father Fitzsimmons, was removed from the parish in April, 1853,⁹⁸ and Father Patrick Lyndon, a man of great executive ability, came from St. Mary's, Charlestown, to take his place. He completed the church, and it was opened on Thanksgiving Day, November 24, 1853. The new SS. Peter and Paul's Church was an impressive Gothic structure, by far the best church in the Diocese at that time, and one of the finest ecclesiastical edifices in the country. The dedication was the grandest ceremony in the history of the Diocese up to that year. Forty priests attended it, the Bishops of Albany and Hartford came, and a tremendous number of people crowded into the church. Bishop Fitzpatrick rededicated the church to the old patrons, and then sang a solemn pontifical Mass at which Father Ryder, S.J., of Holy Cross College, preached. In the evening the Bishop of Hartford presided at the solemn Vespers, and Dr. Moriarty, of Philadelphia, one of the famous preachers of the day, delivered a sermon.⁹⁹

The destruction of SS. Peter and Paul's Church resulted in an important lawsuit known as *Fields versus Tighe*. Tighe owned a pew in the old church; when the new building was opened, he set up a claim for a pew under this title. On being refused possession, he brought suit to recover what he considered was his property. The Bishop contended that Tighe's rights had perished with the fire, and sustained his position by

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, Jan. 16, 1854.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, April 20, 1853.

⁹⁹ *Pilot*, Oct. 9, Nov. 19, 26, Dec. 3, 1853.

the argument that the insurance money used to rebuild the church was not the result of any contribution of the pew-owners, but had been maintained by the strict revenues of the church. The case was tried in the Justice Court in January, 1854, and it was decided that the rights of a pew-owner perished at the time of a fire and did not revive when the church was rebuilt, even if insurance money received from the previous building was used for a new structure.¹⁰⁰

As the parish developed and the number of Catholics in the City Point section increased, a church for this district became necessary, and Father Lyndon erected one on the corner of Fourth and I Streets. This was dedicated on March 19, 1863, as the Gate of Heaven Church by Bishop McFarland, of Hartford. For several years after this it was a mission of the mother-church; but on January 22, 1866, Father James F. Sullivan was appointed pastor.¹⁰¹

In order to take up the development of the South Boston missions, it is necessary to go back to 1847. On June 24th of that year, the Bishop went to Dorchester with Father Fitzsimmons and examined a number of lots of land for the purpose of selecting a site for a church. They decided upon a situation on Washington Street near the corner of Richmond. Here again it was necessary to conceal the fact that Catholics sought the land for a church, and John Reagan, a gardener, was commissioned by the Bishop to conduct the negotiations.¹⁰² Reagan bought the land at an auction for a small price in the name of Father Fitzsimmons. When it became known that a Catholic church was to be built on one of the finest areas in the village, and that part of the land would probably be used for a cemetery, some of the villagers sought to buy back the land at "a large advance on the sum" paid for it. They also petitioned the Legislature to forbid the opening of a burial ground.¹⁰³

There have been some misconceptions about the stone

¹⁰⁰ *Memoranda*, Jan. 16, 1854; Winsor, *The Memorial History of Boston*, III, 533.

¹⁰¹ *Memoranda*, Jan. 11, 1866.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, June 24, 1848.

¹⁰³ *Boston Evening Transcript*, Nov. 2, 1854.

church which Father Fitzsimmons commenced to build. This is the church that was blown up on July 4, 1854, by the Know-Nothings. Now, as a matter of fact, this property never belonged to the Diocese, but always remained in the name of Father Fitzsimmons; the structure was never completed; it is very, very probable that Mass was never celebrated in it; and, finally, the property had reverted to the mortgage-holder some time before the explosion took place.¹⁰⁴

Dorchester and Milton continued as stations of South Boston, and Mass was said in the Dorchester Town Hall once a month until 1862, when Father Thomas R. McNulty was appointed pastor.¹⁰⁵ He built St. Gregory's Church, which was dedicated on April 7, 1864, by the Vicar-General, Very Rev. John J. Williams.¹⁰⁶

On June 17, 1850, Father Fitzsimmons bought land,¹⁰⁷ and soon after began a church in South Canton,¹⁰⁸ probably finishing it in that year. When Father Michael O'Laughlin entered the Diocese in September, 1851, his addition to the woefully inadequate number of priests made it possible to send him to Canton, and thus establish a parish. He was instructed to care also for Easton, Stoughton, and Foxboro.¹⁰⁹ Father O'Laughlin was removed from his post on January 5, 1852, and Canton once more became a station of South Boston.¹¹⁰ Father John Flatley, a curate of SS. Peter and Paul's Church, South Boston, took care of this district. He had also to visit the town of Stoughton. Father Fitzsimmons had attempted to erect a church here, but lost the land to the original owners. Father Flatley was able to buy back part of this land, and on it built the Church of the Immaculate Conception, which was dedicated by the Bishop on November 24, 1859.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ *Episcopal Register*, Dec. 1, 1862 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

¹⁰⁶ *Memoranda*, April 7, 1864; *Sacred Heart Review*, Jan. 30, 1892; *Pilot*, April 16, 1864.

¹⁰⁷ *Norfolk Deeds*, book 195, p. 306.

¹⁰⁸ *Pilot*, Nov. 2, 1850.

¹⁰⁹ *Memoranda*, Sept. 4, 1851.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Jan. 5, 1852; *Catholic Almanac*, 1853; *Diocesan Yearly Report*, 1855 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

¹¹¹ *Memoranda*, Nov. 24, 1859; *Norfolk Deeds*, book 194, p. 165; book 270, p. 190.

In June, 1861, Canton was again established as a parish, and Father Flatley was placed in charge. Since the old church in South Canton was becoming too small for the needs of the parish, Father Flatley bought a new site near the centre of the town on February 27, 1862, and commenced a church that was not completed during this period.¹¹²

Meanwhile, a church had been built at the Easton station. In this town Frederick L. Ames, a manufacturer who employed a number of Irish Catholics, donated the land and Father Fitzsimmons superintended the erection of the church. This new addition was dedicated on August 3, 1851, by the Bishop, under the name of the Immaculate Conception.¹¹³

In January, 1853, the Easton mission was separated from Canton, and Father Aaron L. Roche was placed in charge: he was to have supervision of the stations that were held at Bridgewater, Foxboro, Mansfield, North Wrentham, and Wrentham.¹¹⁴ Father Roche purchased a lot for a church at Bridgewater on March 29, 1853, and began to build a church.¹¹⁵ In 1856 a general revision of assignments and parishes took place in this old mission territory, and Father Thomas B. McNulty, a curate at Salem, was sent to Easton. Father McNulty, however, did not take up his permanent residence at this place, but went to North Bridgewater (now Brockton) in 1857, where he commenced to plan immediately for a new church.¹¹⁶ Soon he was able to buy land, and by April, 1857, he had aroused the enthusiasm of the people so much that in one week of that month he collected three thousand dollars.¹¹⁷ The church was finally completed, and was dedicated to St. Patrick by Bishop Fitzpatrick on May 22, 1859.¹¹⁸

¹¹² *Ibid.*, book 305, p. 1.

¹¹³ *Memoranda*, Aug. 3, 1851.

¹¹⁴ *Diocesan Yearly Report, 1855* (Boston Dioc. Arch.).

¹¹⁵ *Plymouth Deeds*, book 250, pp. 231, 232; *Catholic Almanac, 1854*.

¹¹⁶ For his residence at North Bridgewater see the *Catholic Almanac for 1858*. It is interesting to note that Father Fitzsimmons, of South Boston, bought a lot of land in North Bridgewater on May 22, 1852 (*Plymouth Deeds*, book 246, p. 240). Probably he intended to use it for a church. When Father Roche took over the district, he apparently decided that Bridgewater was a more promising place than North Bridgewater, hence he bought a church lot in Bridgewater and Father Fitzsimmons disposed of his lot on July 17, 1855. The lot at Bridgewater was bought on April 10, 1857 (*Plymouth Deeds*, book 283, p. 144).

¹¹⁷ *Memoranda*, April 30, 1857.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, May 22, 1859.

North Bridgewater served as the centre for Foxboro, Wrentham, Wrentham Centre, South Walpole, Mansfield, Furnace, Easton, and the other Bridgewaters. On December 29, 1862, Father McNulty bought a Methodist church in East Bridgewater,¹¹⁹ which was made over as St. Bridget's Church. In May, 1859, the station of Foxboro was made a parish and was placed under the care of Father Michael X. Carroll.¹²⁰ He bought a lot, and a church was erected by him in 1859, but apparently was never dedicated.¹²¹ From Foxboro stations at Wrentham and Wrentham Centre, Mansfield, and Franklin were attended. The establishment, however, was not too successful, and after the church was destroyed by fire on February 23, 1862, it was abandoned.¹²² But in January, 1863, an attempt was made to revive the parish and Father Thomas Scully was made pastor.¹²³ He had Wrentham, Walpole, and Mansfield as stations. A month later, however, Father Scully was assigned to Malden and the parish passed to the care of North Attleboro.

Father Charles O'Reilly, of Woonsocket, Rhode Island, said the first Mass at Franklin in 1849. Father Carroll had this town as a station. When he left the Foxboro mission, Franklin was apparently attended by Father McCabe, of Woonsocket, for about a year, and was then taken over by Father Philip Gillick, of North Attleboro. At Wrentham, Father Carroll in 1859 bought a lot on which a small building, formerly used as a boot and shoe factory, was remodeled as a chapel.

Meanwhile, a church at Bridgewater had been completed under the title of St. Thomas'.¹²⁴ On October 15, 1863, this place was made a parish under Father Lawrence S. McMahon, afterwards Bishop of Hartford. East and West Bridgewater and Middleboro were attended from here.

¹¹⁹ *Plymouth Deeds*, book 313, p. 178.

¹²⁰ *Memoranda*, May 2, 1859.

¹²¹ *The Catholic Church in New England*, I, 324; *The Catholic Church of New England*, p. 753.

¹²² *Pilot*, March 1, 1862.

¹²³ *Episcopal Register*, Jan. 26, 1863 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

¹²⁴ I do not know the exact date of the opening.

CHAPTER VI

ADDITION, MULTIPLICATION, DIVISION — II

I

THE QUINCY MISSION CENTRE

LATE IN 1848, Father Bernard Carraher was removed from his assignment as pastor of St. Mary's Church, Quincy, and his place was taken, on December 10, 1848, by Father John Roddan, an extremely capable and versatile priest. Father Roddan immediately began a survey of the district and found that a far greater number of Catholics had come to settle there than had been supposed.¹ This increase made it necessary to provide new churches in Quincy and the surrounding towns and to establish new stations. By 1851 Father Roddan had begun this expansion.

In Quincy two ways of providing for this expansion were possible: either St. Mary's Church could be enlarged or a new edifice could be built in Quincy Village. After some discussion with the parishioners, it was decided to make a new foundation at the village and a site on the corner of Gay and School Streets was purchased.² Construction was started in 1851, but a business depression set in and operations practically ceased. Father Roddan then contributed his personal savings and salary as a contributor to *The Pilot* to the extent of five thousand dollars to finish the church; this was almost the entire cost, since the edifice called for the expenditure of six thousand dollars.³ A small sum was also collected from the people in a special drive to raise money.⁴ The dedication to St. John the Baptist took place on November 13, 1853,⁵ Bishop Fitzpatrick conducting

¹ *Memoranda*, Jan. 2, 1849.

² The lot was bought on March 15, 1851 (*Norfolk Deeds*, book 200, p. 171).

³ *The Catholic Church of New England*, p. 714. ⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Memoranda*, Nov. 13, 1853.

the ceremonies; amongst those present were Charles Francis Adams and his wife and Josiah Quincy.⁶

Some time in 1854 or 1855, Father Roddan changed his residence to Randolph, where he remained until 1856, when he was transferred to St. Vincent's, Boston, and Father Roche came from Easton to take his place. The latter stayed until 1863, when a rearrangement of parish lines took place. Father William Hally took charge of the two Quincy churches on October 15, 1863.⁷ Father Roche remained at Randolph until the end of the year, and then removed to Abington at the beginning of 1864.⁸ Father Thomas Walsh took his place at Randolph.

In March, 1864, Father Hally moved from the vicinity of St. Mary's to Gay Street near St. John's, and this church became the centre of the parish.

In 1849 there were a few Catholics dwelling in the town of Cohasset, and Father Roddan said Mass for them at least once in the fall of that year. This event had its origin in the destruction of the Irish immigrant ship, *St. John*, off the Cohasset coast. The bodies of the dead were brought to the town and the selectmen decided to bury them with Protestant rites. The surviving relatives and the few Irish dwelling in the town, however, protested, sent to Quincy, and brought Father Roddan to conduct the services. Shortly after this, on November 4, 1849, he went back to Cohasset, and said Mass for the people in the high school. After this the good people made an ambitious attempt, under the leadership of Bernard McGuire, to establish a mission chapel and they hired a hall for this purpose. It is impossible to say just how successful this venture was. The congregation planned to have, "... Lectures, Reading Rooms, and all the appurtenances necessary for the Catholic residents of Cohasset."⁹ No further notices of services in the town can be found until 1852. In that year *The Pilot* announced that Mass would be celebrated on January 18th by

⁶ *The Catholic Church of New England*, loc. cit.

⁷ *Episcopal Register*, Oct. 15, 1863 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁸ *Randolph Baptismal Register* (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁹ *Pilot*, Nov. 10, 1849.

Father Hearne who was then in the Diocese taking up a collection for the Irish Catholic University.¹⁰

The first attempt to erect a church in one of the Quincy stations was made at Randolph in 1845 by Father Carraher, but construction had to be abandoned because the few Catholics living there were too poor.¹¹ By 1850 their number had increased to such an extent that Father Roddan was encouraged to make another start, and he did succeed in erecting a church; he had, however, to invest three thousand dollars of his own funds in the building in order to do this. This church was dedicated to St. Mary on July 14, 1850, by the Bishop.¹²

Weymouth was a station of Quincy at the very beginning of this period. By 1855 Father Roddan reported to the Bishop that seven hundred Catholics were residing there.¹³ In February, 1859, Father Roche was authorized by the Bishop to begin the construction of a church, and by May it was almost completed. On May 15th an incendiary attempted to destroy it, and he did succeed in burning down the carpenter's shop, but the train of combustible materials leading to the church failed to ignite and the building escaped damage.¹⁴ The Bishop dedicated this church to St. Francis Xavier on December 4, 1859.¹⁵ Weymouth did not become a parish during the episcopacy of Bishop Fitzpatrick; it remained attached to the Randolph church until Father Roche was transferred to Abington in 1863 and then became a mission of that place.¹⁶

Hingham was also a station of Quincy. Probably Father Bernard Carraher was attending it while he was at Quincy. Father Roddan mentions it in December, 1848, as one of his congregations.¹⁷ At the beginning of 1850 the Hingham Catholic Association announced a course of lectures on Church History to be given by Father Roddan.¹⁸ After that services were

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Jan. 17, 1852.

¹¹ *Memoranda*, Jan. 5, 1847.

¹² *Ibid.*, July 14, 1850.

¹³ *Diocesan Yearly Report, 1855* (Boston Dioc. Arch.).

¹⁴ *Memoranda*, May 22, 1859.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Dec. 4, 1859.

¹⁶ *Catholic Almanacs, 1864, 1865, 1866.*

¹⁷ *Randolph Baptismal Register* (Boston Dioc. Arch.).

¹⁸ *History of the Town of Hingham, Massachusetts* (Hingham, 1893), I, 79-80.

held in the Town Hall.¹⁹ Despite their earnest endeavors, however, the people were not able during this period to build a church.²⁰

In 1846 the Sandwich parish was reduced to a mission status and was attached to New Bedford;²¹ and in 1847 it was placed under Quincy.²² At this time, however, the glass industry commenced to expand, and some Irish immigrants came to the town seeking employment. This caused an increase in the demands on the part of the Catholics for the attentions of a priest, and Father William Moran took up his residence as pastor on August 17, 1850.²³ He attended about eleven stations scattered along Cape Cod. Among these were: Hyannis, Plymouth, Harwich, and Wareham.²⁴ In 1854 the erection of a new church at Sandwich was begun,²⁵ but for some years it remained unfinished and unused.

In 1864 Father Peter Bertoldi was placed in charge of Sandwich. He finished the church, and it was opened for the first services on May 14, 1865;²⁶ it was dedicated to St. Peter on June 18, 1865, by Bishop McFarland, of Hartford.²⁷

Father Bertoldi also acquired a Baptist church at Wareham on August 14th,²⁸ and bought land for a church at Harwich in October, 1865.²⁹

At Abington, Mass was announced for July 23, 1848, by Father Carraher,³⁰ and was probably celebrated on that day. By 1855 there were at least seven hundred Catholics in this town,³¹ but, despite the fact that Father Roddan had purchased a lot of land for a church in 1854, nothing was done about

¹⁹ *Ibid.*; *Pilot*, June 25, 1870. ²⁰ *Catholic Almanacs*, 1860, 1861.

²¹ *Memoranda, Synoptical Table of Churches and Clergymen of Massachusetts*, 1846.

²² *Ibid.*, 1847.

²³ Rev. Raymond B. Bourgoin, *The Catholic Church in Sandwich, 1830-1930* (Boston, n.d.), pp. 18 ff.

²⁴ *Diocesan Yearly Report, 1855* (Boston Dioc. Arch.).

²⁵ *Memoranda*, June 18, 1865. ²⁶ *Ibid.*, May 15, 1865. ²⁷ *Ibid.*, June 18, 1865.

²⁸ *The Catholic Church in Sandwich, 1830-1930*, p. 25; *Plymouth Deeds*, book 331, p. 65.

²⁹ S. L. Deyo, *History of Barnstable County, Massachusetts* (New York, 1890), p. 841.

³⁰ *Pilot*, July 22, 1848.

³¹ *Diocesan Yearly Report, 1855* (Boston Dioc. Arch.).

raising the structure, and the people continued to attend services in the Town Hall.³² In May, 1859, the Bishop, after dedicating the new church at North Bridgewater, toured the surrounding countryside and visited Abington, where Mass was now being said twice a month by Father Roche. He noted in his *Memoranda* that a sufficient number of Catholics lived in the town to build a church and support a priest if he could only supply one.³³ Finally in April, 1862, Father Roche bought a new site for a church, and in September construction started. Bishop McFarland, of Hartford, dedicated the church to St. Bridget on November 25, 1863.³⁴ In 1864 Father Roche left Randolph and became the pastor of Abington with Weymouth as a mission.³⁵

II

THE NEW BEDFORD MISSION CENTRE

At New Bedford the few seditious individuals who had caused trouble for Father McGuire continued their activities, and the Bishop finally withdrew Father Thomas R. McNulty, Father McGuire's successor, and ordered him to place himself under Father Murphy at Fall River.³⁶ Father McNulty, however, continued to attend New Bedford and was the pastor. This arrangement was in effect until 1853.³⁷ Before he left New Bedford, Father McNulty had received the Bishop's permission to buy a Universalist meeting-house on the corner of Fifth and School Streets; this sale was completed around March, 1849.³⁸ The old decayed building was then sold and moved and the land was used for a cemetery.³⁹

³² *The Catholic Church of New England*, p. 723.

³³ *Memoranda*, May 22, 1859.

³⁴ *The Catholic Church of New England*, p. 724.

³⁵ *Catholic Almanac*, 1866.

³⁶ *Memoranda*, Oct. 24, 1847: "Rev'd Mr. McNulty is placed under Rev'd Mr. Murphy in Fall River and will also attend New Bedford." Father Henniss, *Notes on the New Bedford Mission* (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*), says Father McNulty was an assistant to Father Murphy.

³⁷ *Notes on the New Bedford Mission*. See also the location of Father McNulty as given in the *Catholic Almanacs* for the period 1848 to 1854.

³⁸ *Memoranda*, March 29, 1849.

³⁹ *Notes on the New Bedford Mission*.

In March, 1853, a priest once more took up residence in the parish when Father Henry E. S. Henniss arrived.⁴⁰ By 1854 he found it necessary to purchase a new cemetery, and he bought land in the town of Dartmouth to which five hundred bodies from the old burying ground were transferred between April 14 and June 1, 1856.⁴¹

In this year, also, the number of parishioners having greatly increased, Father Henniss enlarged the church by adding galleries and increasing the basement space; he also bought a new rectory and land for a future church. Father Henniss died on September 19, 1859, and was succeeded by Father Joseph P. Tallon.

The latter began preparations to erect a new church,⁴² but his work was interrupted by the Civil War, and he died before it became possible to begin again. Father McMahon, afterwards Bishop of Hartford, succeeded him in January, 1865, and was about to erect the new church when Bishop Fitzpatrick died.⁴³

Two stations were attached to the New Bedford mission: one was Martha's Vineyard and the other was Nantucket.

Father McNulty made his first visit to Nantucket in 1846, and continued to go there four times a year after that, saying Mass in the house of Mrs. Lucy Sullivan, a convert of his, and in a building that the Sons of Temperance erected in 1846. When Father Henniss became pastor, he visited the island in the fall of 1853, and in 1854 said Mass in the Sullivan home. He kept up the custom of saying Mass there four times a year, and finally on April 8, 1856, purchased Harmony Hall from David Thrain for eighteen thousand dollars.⁴⁴

These two missionaries also visited Martha's Vineyard, Father McNulty going there in 1848. In his *Notes* on this station Father Henniss wrote that he went to the island on September 5, 1854, and said Mass at Holmes' Hole in Mr. Dorian's Great House.⁴⁵ At Edgartown, according to these *Notes*, he also said

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* ⁴¹ *Ibid.* ⁴² *Memoranda*, Jan. 26, 1864.

⁴³ *The Catholic Church in New England*, I, 453.

⁴⁴ Father Henniss, *Notes on the Nantucket Mission* (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

the first Mass in the house of Joseph Sylva in 1854. After this he continued to minister twice a year to the forty Catholics dwelling on the island.⁴⁶

III

THE FALL RIVER MISSION CENTRE

The development of Catholicity in Fall River was quite unlike that of other mission centres. But it should not be concluded that very little was accomplished. Father Edward Murphy was the pastor, a grand pioneer priest whose career in Fall River spanned the years from 1840 to 1887, and whose activities and character earned for him the right to the beloved title of the "Grand Old Man" of Fall River.

Father Murphy's parish expanded gradually during the years prior to the Civil War; after this conflict there came a phenomenal development that went on for many years. But long before the War the increase in the number of Catholics made it necessary to replace the little church of Bishop Fenwick's time with a larger edifice. And so in 1849 Father Murphy bought land adjacent to the site of St. John the Baptist's Church. Three years later, on August 8, 1852, the Bishop laid the cornerstone, noting in his *Memoranda*:

The Bishop lays the cornerstone of the church of the Assumption of the B. V. M. in Fall River. It is to be a large stone church built on the same spot now occupied in part by the church of St. John the Baptist. This latter building is a small one of wood: was badly constructed from the beginning, and is now in a decayed condition.

It was another Keeley church, and an ambitious project, too, for it was to cost fifty thousand dollars. Construction was a little slow, and it was not until December 16, 1855, that the edifice was dedicated to St. Mary by the Bishop.⁴⁷ This church later became the Cathedral of the Fall River Diocese.

This was practically the only change that took place in Fall River during the period.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* ⁴⁷ *Pilot*, Dec. 22, 1855.

IV

THE TAUNTON MISSION CENTRE

By 1846 the church at Taunton was in a terribly dilapidated condition, and was neither a suitable nor a safe place of worship. When the Bishop discovered this, he ordered Father Wilson, the pastor, to make only such repairs on the structure as were absolutely necessary and to begin preparations to build a new church.⁴⁸ Land opposite the old site was purchased in February, 1848,⁴⁹ and a year later building operations commenced.⁵⁰ Then a series of misfortunes began that harassed the development of the parish for many years.

In constructing the walls of the church, someone was guilty of dishonest work, and on December 1, 1849, a high wind completely wrecked the structure.⁵¹ Unfortunately, a relative of the Bishop was supervising, and the people placed the entire blame on him; the Bishop likewise suffered from their unjust judgments and harsh critical words. A great deal of acerbity was displayed; the pastor gave up his charge on February 5, 1850, and for two years the parish was without the services of a priest. But it was not placed under interdict, as is sometimes stated.⁵²

In the spring of 1852, Father Daniel Hearne was assigned to the parish and he tried to pacify the acrimonious dispositions of the people. But when he attempted to persuade them to accept the church, which had been rebuilt, they refused to listen to him, and in June, 1854, he was forced to begin anew. More adversities happened, however; the old church burned down on June 1, 1856, and a temporary structure had to be built; this and the construction of two churches burdened the parish with a tremendous debt.

Ill-health caused Father Hearne to leave the parish in 1864, and Father Thomas H. Shahan, of Salem, came to replace him on January 1, 1865.⁵³ When Father Shahan finished untangling

⁴⁸ *Memoranda*, Nov. 1, 1846.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, Feb. 7, 1848.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, Feb. 12, 1849.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, Dec. 1, 1849.

⁵² *The Catholic Church in New England*, I, 444-445.

⁵³ *Memoranda*, Jan. 1, 1865.

the financial affairs, he found that the liabilities amounted to eighty thousand dollars — a sum that probably included the unpaid balance on the rejected church — and ten to twenty thousand dollars more was needed to finish the new project.⁵⁴ It seems probable that Father Shahan stopped all construction work and applied himself to clearing off some of these heavy obligations; ⁵⁵ by June, 1865, he had reduced the sum to fifty-seven thousand dollars,⁵⁶ and had, in the meantime, bought a parochial residence.⁵⁷

There was a certain amount of missionary activity in the Taunton stations. The *Catholic Directory* for 1855 notes that a church was being built at Squawbetty, and this same source in the issue for 1866 calls it the "Holy Family" Church. In his report to the Bishop for 1856, Father Hearne says that Mass was read once a month for the people of Squawbetty.⁵⁸ In *The Pilot* of October 30, 1852, there is an announcement that Mass would be said at Norton on November 6th, and the report already referred to mentions that Mass was also said here once a month. Stations were also held at Middleboro and Dighton.⁵⁹ Major developments in the missions and stations of Taunton were, however, carried out by the pastors of other parishes; thus, Father Fitzsimmons, of South Boston, built the church at Easton.

V

THE BLACKSTONE MISSION CENTRE

The Catholics of Blackstone attended Mass in Woonsocket, Rhode Island, for many years. The number of Irish employed

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, Jan. 4, 12, 1865.

⁵⁵ I believe that construction was stopped because of the rapid reduction of the debt, which would indicate that all income was devoted to reducing it. For settlement of the claims see *Memoranda*, Jan. 5, March 11, 1865; Rev. David Hearne to Bishop Fitzpatrick, June 15, 1858 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*); Bishop Fitzpatrick to Father Hearne, Feb. 1, 1861 (*ibid.*).

⁵⁶ *Memoranda*, June 27, 1865.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, Jan. 20, 1865. "Rev. T. H. Shahan has bought the pastoral house in Taunton, paying \$3,500 to Rev. Daniel Hearne for the money expended upon it by him."

⁵⁸ *Diocesan Yearly Report, 1856* (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 1857.

in the woolen mills at Waterford and the villages that made up the town of Blackstone gradually increased, however, and Welcome Farnum, the owner of the mills, decided that they should have a church. He gave a tract of land for this purpose and also a substantial sum of money. The construction was carried on under the direction of Father Charles O'Reilly, pastor of Woonsocket, and when it had been completed, Father O'Reilly was transferred to the Boston Diocese and became the first pastor of this new parish.⁶⁰ The Bishop dedicated the new church to St. Paul on July 11, 1852.⁶¹

In describing the Worcester mission centre, it is pointed out that Father Gibson said Mass at Uxbridge from time to time, and also other priests, such as Father Boyce and Father Farrelly. It was not, however, until Father O'Reilly was assigned to Blackstone that Mass was said there with any regularity. He went to Uxbridge once a month. In 1853 a parish was established at Uxbridge and Father Edward J. Sheridan became pastor. He built a church, which was dedicated to St. Mary on October 26, 1856.⁶²

When Father O'Reilly died in September, 1857, Father Sheridan succeeded him and Uxbridge became a mission of Blackstone.

It will also be noted that the parish of Millbury became a mission of Uxbridge in 1855. It remained in this status for only a short time (1859) and was then turned over to St. Ann's, Worcester.

Grafton was transferred from Worcester to Uxbridge in 1856, and was under Father Sheridan's care until 1859, when it was assigned to St. Ann's, Worcester.⁶³

Father Sheridan bought an old building in 1865 which he fitted up as a chapel for the Catholics residing in Douglas and Manchaug.⁶⁴ Some accounts, however, state that this did not take place until 1867. The *Catholic Directory* first mentions this chapel in 1870.

⁶⁰ *Sacred Heart Review*, Jan. 16, 1897.

⁶¹ *Memoranda*, July 11, 1852.

⁶² *Pilot*, Nov. 29, 1856. ⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Sacred Heart Review*, Jan. 16, 1897.

VI

THE ATTLEBORO MISSION CENTRE

For many years this parish did not have a resident pastor, but was attended by Father Philip Gillick, of Greenville, Rhode Island.⁶⁵ Father Gillick built St. Mary's Church, and it was dedicated by the Bishop on June 19, 1859.⁶⁶ In 1863 Foxboro, Wrentham, Walpole, and Mansfield were attached to this parish. Father Gillick finally resigned from his parish in Greenville and devoted his time exclusively to North Attleboro, but the exact date of this change is not certain. Very probably, however, it took place in 1866.⁶⁷

VII

THE CHARLESTOWN MISSION CENTRE

Despite the fact that it was known to be an anti-Catholic town, the Catholic population of Charlestown increased rapidly because of the opportunities that existed for work on the docks and in the Navy Yard. When Bishop Fitzpatrick took charge of the Diocese, Father George J. Goodwin's health was being slowly undermined by consumption. Constantly watched and cared for by his Bishop, who found in the midst of an exhausting routine of duties many an hour to spend with him, Father Goodwin died on September 13, 1847. He was succeeded by Father Patrick F. Lyndon.

The experience of many parishes in this period was repeated in the case of St. Mary's. The influx of new immigrants taxed the capacity of the church, and it was necessary to enlarge it and to build another. It was Father Lyndon who undertook the alterations of St. Mary's, Father Goodwin having been too unwell. Father Lyndon doubled the capacity of the edifice and refurnished it. In doing this he received magnificent coöpera-

⁶⁵ *Memoranda*, June 19, 1859. ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *Diocesan Yearly Reports*, 1864, 1865, 1866 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*); *Catholic Almanacs*, 1864, 1865, 1866; *Catholic Directory*, 1867.

tion from his people, poor though they were. The work cost seven thousand dollars, yet within a few months they had contributed so generously that not one penny of debt remained on the books of the parish.⁶⁸

Father Lyndon did not continue long in St. Mary's parish after this. On May 1, 1853, it was his misfortune to go through the annoyances of the Hannah Corcoran riots; soon after this he replaced Father Fitzsimmons in the South Boston parish, and Father George A. Hamilton succeeded in Charlestown.

By 1859 St. Mary's capacity, even with its addition, was once more overtaxed, and it became necessary to begin another church. And so it came about that within the borders of that town where the Ursuline Convent had stood, through whose streets the Nativist rioters of 1847 had paraded, and the Corcoran mob had marched, a church was built on the site of a shrine of national liberty: Bunker Hill. It was rather a bold step, not taken, perhaps, without a little deliberate planning. Nor was it done without difficulty; Deacon Hunnewell sold the land, and his neighbors were quite frank in their indignation, but the Deacon ignored their protests and the sale was completed.⁶⁹ Bishop Fitzpatrick, however, did have some twinges of uneasiness. At that time he believed that the pendulum of anti-Catholicism had reached a zenith in its oscillations and was about to swing towards a more favorable point; prejudice was slowly to be replaced by tolerance. Under such circumstances any act like this might possibly stay its motion and cause another outburst. A letter written by him to Archbishop Purcell, who was to preach at the dedication ceremony, exposed this idea. Fearing that he might recall previous events with indignation or scorn in his sermon, Bishop Fitzpatrick warned Archbishop Purcell that it was an occasion for soft words, and only soft words; his address could do much to pacify the people of Charlestown.⁷⁰

The laying of the cornerstone of St. Francis de Sales' Church took place on September 11, 1859. A mammoth tent was

⁶⁸ *Pilot*, May 29, 1852.

⁶⁹ *The Catholic Church of New England*, p. 121.

⁷⁰ Bishop Fitzpatrick to Archbishop Purcell, Aug. 20, 1859 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

erected over the site, and into it crowded five thousand people, among whom were Commodore Hudson, of the Navy Yard, Mayor Dana, of Charlestown, and ex-Mayor Frothingham, Archbishop Purcell, and Bishop Fitzpatrick.⁷¹ Truly, the tent must have had elastic sides! The Bishop blessed the stone, and the Archbishop delivered the sermon that was to be spread with honey. Probably the Archbishop was somewhat disturbed by the situation, for his address was not equal to his usual style and ability.⁷² It was a great occasion for Father Hamilton, and he heralded it far and wide, but he was cautious, too; when the ceremony was over, a five-ton piece of granite was placed upon the cornerstone — no Know-Nothing would ever move that and destroy the memorial beneath!⁷³

When the church was dedicated on June 17, 1862, Bishop Fitzpatrick, because of ill-health, was in Europe, and the ceremony was performed by Bishop de Goësbriand. If anyone enjoyed that ceremony it was the editor of *The Pilot*; on June 22, 1862, he burst forth into print:

Yes, we say, the Demon of Fanaticism has been made to bite his own lips. A Catholic Pontiff, an American to boot, has exorcised him out of Bunker Hill. The Demon of Bigotry would not allow a Catholic hymn to be sung within distant hearing of the worshipper of the monument.

O! it was a day of honest pride for the Catholics! There is the Church enthroned! Ye haters of Catholicity could not allow a modest Catholic dwelling rest on Mount Benedict, and ye have refused to return what you have stolen from us. We, Catholics, give you now a most beautiful Catholic Church, stately raising its spire on a par with Bunker Hill Monument.⁷⁴

A passage in *The Middlesex Journal* of April 22, 1854, stating that the Catholics of Stoneham attended their own "meeting," leads to the conclusion that the Charlestown priests were saying Mass in this town.

⁷¹ *Pilot*, Sept. 17, 1859.

⁷² *Memoranda*, Sept. 11, 1859.

⁷³ *Pilot*, Sept. 17, 1859; *Sacred Heart Review*, Feb. 11, 1893; *Memoranda*, Sept. 11, 1859.

⁷⁴ *Pilot*, June 28, 1862.

On July 2, 1863, Father John Williams, Vicar-General, acting for the Bishop, divided the parish into two parochial districts. Father Hamilton was placed at St. Francis de Sales' and Father Emiliano Gerbi, O.S.F., went to St. Mary's.⁷⁵

In the summer of 1854, Father John Ryan arrived in Boston. He was sent as a curate to work with Father Hamilton at St. Mary's. When the Malden and Medford Catholics, who usually went to Mass at St. Mary's, learned of his presence, they petitioned the Bishop to make Father Ryan their pastor.⁷⁶ The Malden Catholics at that time possessed a lot for a church, which they had purchased on February 25, 1854.⁷⁷ The Medford Catholics also had secured a site. Father Ryan was appointed pastor of the Malden and Medford congregation in November, 1854.⁷⁸ He persuaded his two flocks to abandon the separate sites they had purchased and to combine on a new site convenient for both. The lot on which the Immaculate Conception Church, Malden, is now situated, was bought on September 4, 1855.⁷⁹ The first Mass was said in the basement of the unfinished church on December 25, 1855.⁸⁰ The pastor of the Malden church also had charge of what was then called St. Joseph's Church in South Reading (Wakefield). This church had been started by Father Shahan, of Salem.

VIII

THE EAST BOSTON MISSION CENTRE

East Boston was practically a new field for parochial work when Bishop Fitzpatrick succeeded Bishop Fenwick. Father Nicholas J. O'Brien had been sent there to organize a congre-

⁷⁵ *Memoranda*, July 2, 1863.

⁷⁶ Louise F. Hunt, "The Roman Catholic Church in Medford," *Medford Historical Register*, XVII (1941), 2.

⁷⁷ *Middlesex Deeds*, book 674, p. 202.

⁷⁸ "The Roman Catholic Church in Medford," *loc. cit.*; Father Ryan's *Baptismal Register* (Boston Dioc. Arch.).

⁷⁹ *Middlesex Deeds*, book 725, p. 44.

⁸⁰ *The Parish of the Immaculate Conception, Malden-Medford, 1859-1906, an Historical Sketch*, p. 8.

gation in 1844, and had established himself in a Protestant meeting-house which he purchased. His labors extended not only to the people living in East Boston, but also to Catholics stationed at the island forts in the harbor and those living on the other islands. Of these latter the most important was Deer Island, where immigrants suffering from ship fever were housed.

Father O'Brien left East Boston some time in the early part of January, 1847, probably because this change would enable him to give more constant attention to the affairs of the newly founded *Catholic Observer*, which he edited. His successor was Father Charles McCallion.

Father McCallion first came to Boston from the Cincinnati Diocese to collect money to pay the debt on his church. Bishop Fitzpatrick was very kind to him, and Father McCallion finally decided to seek admission to the Diocese. The Bishop gave his consent, provided he could secure his release from Bishop Purcell. Father McCallion wrote his Ordinary, and gave as one of the reasons for allowing him to go that, "there are ten persons here calling for the services of a Priest for every one I have to ride after through Guernsey and the neighboring counties."⁸¹

Father McCallion soon came to appreciate more and more the truth of these words, for soon after his arrival so great was the increase in the number of parishioners that it became necessary to enlarge St. Nicholas' Church (*c.a.* November, 1848).⁸²

On September 3, 1851, Father William Wiley, who had been stationed in Providence at the time that the Diocese of Hartford was created, and had remained there, returned to the Boston Diocese. The story of his life has already been told. Without a doubt, the Bishop rejoiced to receive back this indefatigable missionary. East Boston was chosen for his last labors, and Father McCallion was sent to Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

Father Wiley was able to do little more than plan the future of the East Boston church. Early in 1855 he realized that the

⁸¹ Rev. Charles McCallion to Bishop Purcell, Jan. 2, 1847 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

⁸² *Memoranda*, Nov. 5, 1848.

end of his life was approaching, and seeking someone to carry on his work, he asked the Bishop to recall from the Hartford Diocese Boston's most extraordinary missionary, Father James Fitton.⁸³ The request was granted by Bishop O'Reilly, who merely asked that he remain at his post until another was found to take his place. Then Father Wiley began to prepare for death.

Father Haskins described his last days in a eulogy which he preached at the parochial Mass celebrated for the repose of Father Wiley's soul:

During his long and distressing illness he had no cares or anxieties, either about his own temporal affairs or those of the Church. Everything had been foreseen, every arrangement made, long before his sickness. Consequently his three months' illness was a three months' retreat or preparation for death. The patient resignation to the Divine will, humility, cheerful piety, and religious fervor that had marked his course from boyhood and shed light on the path of his pilgrimage, shone with ever-increasing lustre as he approached the dark valley of the shadow of death, and cheered him with the view of the city of God. For several days preceding his death, he was almost constantly at prayer. He was always making ejaculations like these — Sweet Jesus, I love thee. God be merciful to me. Holy Mary, sweet Mother, pray for me. On the evening of his death he asked me to read to him the *Dies Irae*, and at the close of it he signed himself with the sign of the cross, and said devoutly, Amen; and just before his death he clasped his hands together and cried — "Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit," and then breathed forth his pure soul into the hands of God who gave it.⁸⁴

What a scene that was! Two men who had found the way to the Church. Two converts who sought the altar and the priesthood. Two convert priests assisting and inspiring each other at a supreme moment; one by his brotherly and priestly ministra-

⁸³ See *The Pilot*, Aug. 25, 1855, for two fine articles on Father Fitton.

⁸⁴ I have taken this from the long and very beautiful tribute of Father Haskins, published in *The Pilot*, May 26, 1855.

tions, the other by his display of sublime confidence in God at the hour of death.

The relationship that existed between Father Wiley and Father Haskins was, of course, quite close, and it appears not only to have been a spiritual one: they also labored side by side for the development of the Church in East Boston. During Father Wiley's life, Father Haskins bought a lot of land on Bennington Street with the intention of locating the House of the Angel Guardian there and building a church.⁸⁵

Some time later, probably in 1858, he erected a small church, which was known as the Chapel of Our Lady, Star of the Sea.⁸⁶ This chapel probably was not used for more than three years. After 1860 Father Haskins had too many responsibilities in Roxbury to allow him to continue missionary activities in East Boston.

In 1864 Father Fitton bought a number of lots directly across the street from Father Haskins' site. Here he erected a small chapel in which the first Mass was celebrated on December 26, 1864.⁸⁷

Father Fitton ably built on the foundation laid by Father Wiley. By August 17, 1856, he opened a new church dedicated to the Holy Redeemer, although at this time it was not completed.⁸⁸ When it was finished, the old church was remodeled for a school.⁸⁹

Still the same prodigious laborer he had always been, Father Fitton's work was not confined to the vicinity of the Holy Redeemer Church. Deer Island remained in his charge and sta-

⁸⁵ *Pilot*, July 30, 1853.

⁸⁶ There is no certain date for the beginning of the chapel. In the *Catholic Almanac*, 1854, there is listed, "Mary, Star of the Sea (E.B.) Lot bought. Rev. G. F. Haskins." This appears again in 1856; no further mention is made until 1859, when there is listed, "Chapel of Our Lady of the Star of the Sea." See also *Diocesan Yearly Report*, 1859 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁸⁷ *The Catholic Church in New England*, I. pp. 168-169; *The Catholic Church of New England*, p. 112. For Father Haskins' purchase see *Suffolk Deeds*, book 650, p. 261; book 658, p. 173. For Father Fitton's purchase see *Suffolk Deeds*, book 839, pp. 17-18; book 840, pp. 50, 141; book 841, pp. 141-142; book 850, p. 18. A map at the end of Book 494, *Suffolk Deeds*, shows the location of the lots.

⁸⁸ *Memoranda*, Aug. 31, 1856.

⁸⁹ See the chapter on the development of schools. I have discussed all parish schools there.

tions were maintained by him at Point Shirley and Winthrop.⁹⁰ Point Shirley was formerly a station of the Chelsea mission centre.

IX

THE CAMBRIDGE MISSION CENTRE

Arlington, Lexington, and Medford were attached to the Cambridge parish as the period opened.

The days were passing when Cambridge was a quiet old town of wide, comfortable streets, lined with dignified ancient mansions over which lingered the romance of Revolutionary times, and the brisk life of industry and commerce was being substituted. By 1846 the town had become a city and the city was attracting many Catholics, who came to work in the new industries.

Forced by the immense crowds that sought admission to St. John's, Father Dougherty inaugurated a project for a new church on January 30, 1848. On that day he said Mass in Lyceum Hall, Old Cambridge, and appealed to the congregation for subscriptions to finance the new building; sixteen thousand dollars was raised.⁹¹ Father Dougherty was a grand publicity man and continually kept his purpose before the people of the Diocese. *The Pilot* was his pulpit, and from it, time and again, he made his appeals for assistance. As usual the people responded generously, and, by July 12th the Bishop had laid the cornerstone of St. Peter's Church on Observatory Hill, near the Harvard Observatory.⁹² The first services were held in the basement of the new church on September 10, 1848.⁹³

Shortly after this, in November, 1848, a division was made, and Father George Riordan came from Springfield to take

⁹⁰ These two places are first mentioned as stations in the *Catholic Almanac*, 1856.

⁹¹ *Pilot*, Jan. 29, Feb. 5, 1848.

⁹² *Memoranda*, July 12, 1848.

⁹³ *Pilot*, Sept. 9, 1848.

charge of St. John's, and Father Dougherty was transferred to the new parish.⁹⁴

Some years later, in April, 1859, the people of Cambridgeport, under the leadership of Father Francis X. Branagan, of St. John's, purchased the site of the old Town Hall, on the corner of Harvard and Norfolk Streets for a church.⁹⁵ But this project was heavily mortgaged, and it was not until October 21, 1864, that the debt was paid. After that, in the winter and spring of 1865, collections were taken up in St. John's and St. Peter's parishes to help build the church. Father Anthony Rossi, a curate at St. John's, was apparently appointed in the fall of 1865 to take charge of the new parish and the church-building. He was not successful, and some time early in 1866 the task of building the church was turned over to Father Dougherty.⁹⁶

Father Dougherty undoubtedly was the pioneer priest in Arlington, Lexington, and for a time Medford. But there is no historical evidence that he did anything for the Catholics of Malden, Everett, Stoneham, Wakefield, or Reading, as is sometimes said,⁹⁷ except that some Catholics probably attended his monthly Mass at Medford during the years 1849 to 1854. It is clear that in the early years of this period the towns north and northwest of Boston were divided into three mission areas, dependent respectively on St. Peter's and St. John's, Cambridge, and St. Mary's, Charlestown. This division was based on railroads. St. Peter's took care of the towns on the railroad that led out to Lexington via West Cambridge (Arlington). St. John's served the near-by towns on the Boston and Lowell Railroad. Charlestown served the people living near the stations of the Boston and Maine Railroad.

The first documentary evidence for a Catholic service in Lexington is to be found in the Town Treasurer's ledger. Here

⁹⁴ *Memoranda*, Nov. 6, 1848.

⁹⁵ *Pilot*, April 16, 1859; *Cambridge Press*, March 14, 1868; *Middlesex Deeds*, book 840, pp. 8, 243.

⁹⁶ *Cambridge Chronicle*, Sept. 2, 1865; *Fair Visitor*, Nov. 18, 1872; *Catholic Almanac*, 1866.

⁹⁷ *Sacred Heart Review*, Feb. 18, 1893.

it is recorded that on March 5, 1852, the Catholics paid seven dollars for the rent of the Town Hall. In 1864 Lexington was attached to Woburn.⁹⁸

At Medford the first public services were held in 1849 in the Town Hall, and thereafter services were conducted once a month. In 1853 the people purchased a lot for a church. The history of this venture has been discussed in the account of the Charlestown mission centre.

According to Bishop Fitzpatrick, the Catholics of Melrose also desired to have a place of worship in their town; there is a note in the *Memoranda* to the effect that a Mr. Long called on him and proposed that the people should buy a Protestant church that was for sale. The Bishop referred him to Father Ryan, but there is nothing to show that the negotiations ever got beyond this stage.⁹⁹

At the time of his transfer to St. Peter's, Father Dougherty had been saying Mass for the Catholics of Woburn in the Town Hall; he had received this station from Waltham in 1847. Father Riordan continued this work, and it would seem that Father Flood also came from Waltham from time to time.¹⁰⁰

Father Lawrence Carroll took Father Riordan's place at St. John's in 1852, and he immediately inaugurated a movement to build a church. A lot was bought on December 3, 1853.¹⁰¹ The church was dedicated to St. Charles Borromeo on September 9, 1855.¹⁰² This building greatly pleased the Bishop, and he noted that it was

. . . a capacious and very cheap building that answers every purpose and is nearly paid for so that income may be saved to build a better church long before the present one will have become untenable. [Compare] Mr. Carroll's plan to that of those who build fine churches for congregations when the means are too limited to pay for them.¹⁰³

⁹⁸ Charles Hudson, *History of the Town of Lexington, Middlesex County, Mass., from Its First Settlement to 1868; Revised and Continued to 1912 by the Lexington Historical Society* (Boston, 1913), I, 360.

⁹⁹ *Memoranda*, March 4, 1857. ¹⁰⁰ *Sacred Heart Review*, April 22, 1899.

¹⁰¹ *Archbishop's Book of Deeds* (Boston Dioc. Arch.).

¹⁰² *Episcopal Register*, 1855 (Boston Dioc. Arch.).

¹⁰³ *Memoranda*, Oct. 21, 1856.

This statement illustrates very well the Bishop's construction policy: cheap buildings of adequate size that could be erected at a very reasonable cost. Then, after this was done, money could be saved to put up a more pretentious structure in the future.

From 1860 to 1862, although Woburn was attended from Malden, it was, officially, still a mission of St. John's.¹⁰⁴ In 1862 Father John McCarthy came to Woburn as pastor. He did not remain long, and Father John Qualey took his place in 1864.

During the Fitzpatrick period, Father Qualey went to Lexington at least once a month, and, when circumstances permitted it, Mass was celebrated every Sunday. In 1865 he was able to buy a Universalist meeting-house in East Lexington and it was converted into a mission church; at this time no title was attached to it.¹⁰⁵

X

THE WALTHAM-WATERTOWN MISSION CENTRE

The unfortunate history of the Waltham parish in the early days of the Fitzpatrick period is discussed elsewhere; the story of the development of the parish and its missions can be started here by recalling that Father Strain moved to Watertown soon after the "Riot," and was transferred to St. Mary's, Boston, in February, 1847.¹⁰⁶ Father Patrick Flood succeeded him. Father Flood began to say Mass in Waltham in June, 1847, using the Town Hall, and in November opened the church once more. He was, of course, at this time living in Watertown.¹⁰⁷

As related in the history of the Fenwick period, the Watertown station was begun in 1837. When Father Flood took up residence there, the Catholics had no church, and he petitioned the selectmen for permission to use the Town Hall. He was

¹⁰⁴ *Catholic Almanac*, 1861. ¹⁰⁵ *Catholic Almanac*, 1866.

¹⁰⁶ St. Mary's Church, Boston, *Baptismal Register*.

¹⁰⁷ The statement in *The Catholic Church of New England*, p. 635, that there was a church at Watertown which was burned in 1846, is not correct.

refused. The Whig Reading Room in Watertown Square was then hired, and meetings were held here for several months.¹⁰⁸

On June 2, 1847, Father Flood bought a Methodist church in Watertown as a place of worship for his congregation.¹⁰⁹ As in so many other cases, the purchase was hindered by bigotry. In this instance a definite date was set for the completion of the agreement, and failure to observe it entailed annulment of the contract. It proved difficult to trace the title and the time consumed in doing this extended beyond the stipulated day. While this was going on, the trustees discovered that the purchasers were Catholics and they took advantage of the time clause and refused to give a deed to the property. The Bishop consulted a lawyer, who advised that the trustees could be forced to complete the sale. This was made known to them and they reluctantly concluded the transaction.¹¹⁰

The Watertown congregation was a fairly large one, and within a few weeks the church proved to be inadequate. Father Flood then bought land for a new church, and the cornerstone of St. Patrick's was laid by the Bishop on September 27, 1847.¹¹¹ It was opened in 1848.¹¹²

Father Flood began the construction of a new St. Mary's Church on School Street, Waltham, in 1858,¹¹³ but died in 1863 before it was finished. In 1860 the Waltham-Watertown mission was divided. Father Patrick Flood took as his parish Waltham, Concord, and West Newton, while Father Bernard Flood, apparently a relative of Father Patrick, took Watertown and Newton Upper Falls.¹¹⁴

Some account must be given of the other Waltham stations. Canton passed to South Boston in 1848. At Fitchburg, Father Flood bought land for a church in June, 1847;¹¹⁵ the develop-

¹⁰⁸ *The Catholic Church of New England*, p. 635. The statement that it was used for only a few months is mine.

¹⁰⁹ *Middlesex Deeds*, book 513, p. 428.

¹¹⁰ *Memoranda*, May 28, June 1, 3, 1847. ¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, Sept. 27, 1847.

¹¹² *The Catholic Church in New England*, I, 269.

¹¹³ *Middlesex Deeds*, book 793, p. 453; *The Catholic Church in New England*, I, 265.

¹¹⁴ *Catholic Almanacs*, 1861, 1864; St. Patrick's Church, Watertown, *Baptismal Register* (Boston Dioc. Arch.); *Pilot*, Jan. 6, 1877, Father Flood's obituary notice.

¹¹⁵ *Catholic Observer*, June 26, 1847.

ment of this station, however, was carried out by Father Gibson, of Worcester. A site was also acquired by Father Flood in Brighton,¹¹⁶ but this station was taken over by Brookline some time after this. Concord first appears as a station of Waltham in 1845. Father Patrick Flood, to whom the station was assigned when the Waltham parish was divided, purchased a Universalist church for the use of the congregation on December 26, 1863.¹¹⁷ Father Strain had started a station at Newton Upper Falls, but his successor did not give the people any great amount of attention, at least until after 1856,¹¹⁸ although it is said that he conducted services in the home of a Mr. Cahill in 1850.¹¹⁹ After 1860 it would seem that the congregation assembled weekly in Elliot Hall under the leadership of Father Bernard Flood.¹²⁰ In 1863 Father McCarthy, of Watertown, took charge.¹²¹

XI

THE CHELSEA-LYNN MISSION CENTRE

Father Rattigan's unfortunate accident, mentioned in Part III, ended his career in Chelsea, and he was succeeded some time later in 1847 by Father John O'Beirne, but he remained only for a short time and was removed on December 23, 1847.¹²² After him came Father John O'Brien, who was appointed on February 5, 1848, to take charge of Chelsea, Lynn, and Newburyport.¹²³ For some reason or other, however, Father O'Brien preferred to concentrate his labors in Newburyport, and this town was made a parish on May 15, 1848.¹²⁴

Father Charles Smith then became the Chelsea pastor until January 4, 1851, when he died.¹²⁵ He purchased a school build-

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.* ¹¹⁷ *Archbishop's Book of Deeds (Boston Dioc. Arch.).*

¹¹⁸ *The Diocesan Yearly Reports, 1855, 1856*, do not mention Newton as a station.

¹¹⁹ *The Catholic Church of New England*, p. 640. ¹²⁰ *Ibid.* ¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² *Memoranda*, Dec. 23, 1847. ¹²³ *Ibid.*, Feb. 5, 1848. ¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, May 15, 1848.

¹²⁵ I do not know the exact date of his appointment, but it must have been soon after Father O'Brien left, for by Aug. 22, 1848, he was asking for permission to buy a lot of land for a church in Chelsea (*Memoranda*, Aug. 22, 1848). For Father Smith's death see the *Memoranda*, Jan. 4, 1851.

ing from the Lynn civil authorities on January 9, 1849,¹²⁶ and converted it into a chapel. At the same time he secured a large double house and a lot in Chelsea from the Winnisimmet Ferry Company; one half of this was converted into a chapel and the other was used as a priest's residence.¹²⁷

Father Patrick Strain succeeded him. He found that the church in Lynn was too small, and soon after taking charge he enlarged it and began to prepare to erect a new one.

Late in the evening of May 28, 1859, a fire was discovered in the rear of St. Mary's Church, Lynn, and, although it was apparently a trivial affair, lack of proper equipment hampered the firemen and it was not long before the entire structure was ablaze.¹²⁸ This fire was set by an incendiary. A group that investigated the cause came to this conclusion, but was unable to name the culprit.¹²⁹ Father Strain, however, after some inquiry proved that there had been a report about that the church would be burned, and showed to his own satisfaction from circumstantial evidence who the culprit was.¹³⁰ It seems to be sufficient in this account to set down merely these facts; time has destroyed the value of any further revelations.

Father Strain was without a church for some time after this fire. On July 25, 1860, he bought a new site for a church on South Common Street.¹³¹ Here he built a new St. Mary's Church. It was not dedicated until October 2, 1870.¹³²

In regard to Chelsea, Father Strain reported in 1856 that a new church was needed,¹³³ and in April, 1859, the Bishop was shown plans for the building. He considered them, however, to be unsatisfactory and too expensive, and P. C. Keeley was asked to revise them.¹³⁴ By the latter part of 1861 the new church, although not finished, was being used.¹³⁵

¹²⁶ *Essex Deeds*, book 407, p. 70. The purchase was authorized by a town meeting on Nov. 15, 1848.

¹²⁷ *The Catholic Church of New England*, p. 118.

¹²⁸ *Pilot*, June 4, 1859. ¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, June 18, 1859.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, June 18, 1859; *Msgr. Strain's Diary*, July 3, et seq., 1859 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

¹³¹ *Essex Deeds*, book 609, p. 250.

¹³² *Episcopal Register*, Oct. 2, 1870 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*)

¹³³ *Diocesan Yearly Report*, 1856 (*ibid.*).

¹³⁴ *Memoranda*, April 25, 1859. ¹³⁵ *Catholic Almanac*, 1861.

Father Strain maintained a station at Point Shirley in 1853 and 1854.¹³⁶ He also had a station at Nahant, where in September, 1863, he bought a site for a church.¹³⁷ During the summer season priests from the Cathedral parish said Mass at Nahant on Sunday.¹³⁸

Newburyport was not privileged to possess the genius and ability of Father O'Brien for many months; the Bishop sent him to Lowell on December 21, 1848, and Father Henry Lennon came to replace him.¹³⁹ He was quite capable of occupying Father O'Brien's place.

Father Lennon immediately gave his attention to the erection of a new church for his rapidly growing congregation. John Nichols, of Salem, bought the land for the new edifice and then conveyed it to the Bishop.¹⁴⁰ Nichols acted as the Bishop's agent for a great many purchases in Essex County. Once the land had been acquired, construction proceeded rapidly, and on April 27, 1852, the cornerstone was laid by the Bishop.

The Pilot's account of this event is rather interesting:

Such a thing had never before happened in Newburyport. It is an old town lately elevated to the rank of a city. It is a quiet, old-fashioned New England town, with a reputation for Puritanism that has long caused it to be regarded as the most precise place in precise, straight-laced Massachusetts. It has, like Salem, Plymouth, and some other New England towns, a grave, wrinkled, old witch look about it, as if it were haunted by the ghosts of the old puritans, and the witches tossed by them in blankets, drowned, hanged, or otherwise put out of misery. In a town like this, the ceremonies attending the commencement of a Catholic church constituted an event to be remembered long. Indeed it appeared to some of the worthy descendants of the pilgrims that the Pope had taken solemn possession of the town. The inhabitants turned out in a body to assist at the ceremony. A few of the more fanatical were

¹³⁶ *Catholic Directory, 1854, 1855.*

¹³⁷ *Essex Deeds*, book 650, p. 331.

¹³⁸ *Memoranda*, Aug. 12, 1860.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, Dec. 21, 1848.

¹⁴⁰ The land was acquired on May 12, 1851 (*Essex Deeds*, book 444, p. 284).

filled with horror and concern, and they shut themselves up in their houses, exclaiming, Ichabod! Ichabod! the glory hath departed from Newburyport! But the great mass of citizens were interested spectators of the functions of the day.¹⁴¹

General Caleb Cushing was then Mayor of the city, and he directed the authorities to open the Council Chamber in the City Hall to the Bishop and clergy for use as a vesting room. From there the procession marched through the principal streets to the scene of the ceremony — an occurrence that transcended any previous Newburyport experience — where the Bishop conducted the ritual and Father McElroy, S.J., preached.

The new church was dedicated to the Immaculate Conception on March 17, 1853; it was an edifice that far surpassed in size and architectural beauty any of the numerous meeting-houses of the city. The Bishop conducted the ceremony, and his appearance made a tremendous impression on the non-Catholic part of his audience. *The Newburyport Union* described him in this fashion:

Nature evidently designed him as a leader wherever he might be. He would have been a Bishop in any church, where they had one.¹⁴²

Amesbury was a station of Newburyport. Father Lennon visited the town and said Mass in William Daley's home. It is related that the number present was often sufficiently large to fill the house and overflow onto the steps; at Communion time the priest would have to go out-of-doors to administer the Sacrament to them.¹⁴³ By 1855 these calls at Amesbury had ceased, because it was impossible to secure a suitable meeting-place.¹⁴⁴

By 1859, however, Amesbury and West Newbury also each had a Catholic population of from four to five hundred souls,

¹⁴¹ *Pilot*, May 8, 1852.

¹⁴² *Pilot*, March 26, 1853.

¹⁴³ D. Hamilton Hurd, ed., *Municipal History of Essex County, Massachusetts* (Philadelphia, 1888), I, 183-186.

¹⁴⁴ *Diocesan Yearly Report, 1855* (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

and, according to the Bishop, a priest should have had sole charge of these two towns.¹⁴⁵ Father Lennon once more conducted services in Amesbury, and for this purpose hired Washington Hall for a chapel on Sunday, and also secured Franklin Hall for a Sunday school.¹⁴⁶ This arrangement was very awkward, and the people of their own accord asked the pastor to build a church, accompanying the request with a large sum of money that they had raised as a proof that they were in earnest.¹⁴⁷ The church lot was purchased on July 13, 1865.¹⁴⁸ The church was dedicated on August 26, 1866.

There is little information about Father Lennon's activities in West Newbury except that he visited it regularly during this period.¹⁴⁹ He also visited Ipswich some time late in 1848 and said Mass in a Mr. McMahon's home, and during 1850 Mass was said occasionally in the Town Hall.¹⁵⁰

XII

THE SALEM MISSION CENTRE

The Salem parish, under the guidance of the zealous and self-sacrificing Father James Conway, developed in a manner that won the sincere praise of Bishop Fitzpatrick. By 1850 the number of Catholics in the upper part of Salem became sufficient to warrant a new church, and Father Conway bought a site for one on January 1, 1850.¹⁵¹ A church was erected, and Mass was celebrated in it for the first time on December 25, 1850.¹⁵² Father Thomas H. Shahan, who came to St. Mary's

¹⁴⁵ *Memoranda*, June 5, 1859.

¹⁴⁶ *The Catholic Church of New England*, p. 437.

¹⁴⁷ *Municipal History of Essex County*, loc. cit.

¹⁴⁸ *Essex Deeds*, book 687, p. 21.

¹⁴⁹ *Diocesan Yearly Report, 1855* (Boston Dioc. Arch.).

¹⁵⁰ *The Catholic Church of New England*, p. 442. See the discussion of Ipswich under the Salem Mission Centre.

¹⁵¹ *Essex Deeds*, book 609, p. 250.

¹⁵² Most Reverend Louis S. Walsh, *Origin of the Catholic Church in Salem, and Its Growth in St. Mary's Parish and the Parish of the Immaculate Conception* (Boston, 1890), pp. 52, 53; St. James' Church, *Baptismal Register* (Boston Dioc. Arch.).

in December, 1850, cared for this mission until 1853;¹⁵³ at that time Salem was divided into two parishes, and Father Shahan became the pastor of St. James'.

Like many other churches of those days, St. Mary's was poorly constructed, and by 1856 the floor timbers had rotted away and were no longer capable of supporting safely the weight of the congregation; this made it necessary to plan for a new church. Father Conway, in the spring of 1857, supervised the construction of the foundations of this structure, but he died on May 24, 1857, and its completion was left to Father Shahan. For some reason or other, the Bishop decided not to continue the practice of having two parishes, probably because of a lack of experienced priests, and Father Shahan became the pastor of the entire district. By the end of the year the church was practically finished, and on January 10, 1858, the Bishop dedicated it to the Immaculate Conception.

Father Shahan remained at the Immaculate Conception Church until 1861; he was then moved back to St. James', and in January, 1862, Father Michael Hartney took charge of the Immaculate Conception parish.

From St. James' parish stations and missions were developed at Marblehead, Lanesville, Ipswich, Gloucester, Rockport, and North Danvers.¹⁵⁴ Father Shahan also visited Lynnfield, Beverly, and Manchester.¹⁵⁵

At Marblehead in 1854, Father Shahan, after having said Mass in private homes for some time, hired Anderson Hall and conducted services every second and third Sunday of the month. By 1855 a lot of land for a church had been purchased.¹⁵⁶ In 1857, the congregation having increased, the Town Hall was hired, and a drive was commenced to raise money for a new church. In 1859 Our Lady, Star of the Sea Church, was erected on Prospect Street. This mission was transferred to the Danvers parish in November, 1865.¹⁵⁷

In 1852 a lot of land was purchased in Gloucester. On it

¹⁵³ *Catholic Almanac*, 1854.

¹⁵⁴ *Diocesan Yearly Report*, 1855, 1856 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

¹⁵⁵ St. James' Church, *Baptismal Register* (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

¹⁵⁶ *Diocesan Yearly Report*, 1855. ¹⁵⁷ *History of Essex County*, I, 113, 114.

there was a building which was used as a chapel until the summer of 1855.¹⁵⁸ Then a Baptist church was bought and moved to the site. It was dedicated to St. Ann by Father Shahan on September 30, 1855.¹⁵⁹ In his report to the Bishop for 1855, Father Shahan recommended that a priest should be stationed at Cape Ann, since this would give the fishermen, many of whom were lost at sea each year, an opportunity to go to confession before going to sea.¹⁶⁰ This, perhaps, was the reason why the Bishop separated Gloucester from Salem on April 22, 1857, and placed Father Lewis Acquarone in charge; he also had a mission at Rockport and stations at Essex and Annisquam.¹⁶¹

Father John McCabe, of Salem, said the first Mass at Rockport in Eureka Hall; this occurred some time in 1850. This town and Lanesville were visited once a month after this.¹⁶² In 1856 Father Shahan built a small church, known as St. Joachim's, on Broadway, not far from the railroad station. This church became a mission of Gloucester.

Of the Ipswich station the usual account is that it was attended from Salem and then was transferred to Newburyport. Very probably this was the actual situation, since in his report to the Bishop for 1855 Father Shahan makes no mention of Ipswich, but officially it was otherwise. According to the *Catholic Almanacs*, up to and including 1857, Ipswich was a station of Father Shahan; from 1857 to 1859 it appears as a station of Gloucester.¹⁶³ Apparently it was then transferred to Newburyport once more.¹⁶⁴

Saugus is also given as a station of Salem in the *Catholic Almanacs* for 1854 and 1855.

The customary account of Danvers relates that Father Shahan

¹⁵⁸ *Catholic Almanac*, 1854.

¹⁵⁹ Note by "McNeill" in the *Baptismal Register of St. Ann's Church (Boston Dioc. Arch.)*; *Pilot*, Oct. 13, 1855; June 3, 1876; *The Catholic Church in New England*, I, 279.

¹⁶⁰ *Diocesan Yearly Report*, 1855 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

¹⁶¹ *Memoranda*, April 22, 1857; *Diocesan Yearly Report*, 1857 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

¹⁶² *Diocesan Yearly Report*, 1855.

¹⁶³ Both the *Metropolitan Catholic Almanac*, 1859-1860, and Dunigan's *Catholic Almanac*, 1859-1860 give this information.

¹⁶⁴ *History of Essex County*, I, 473-474.

said the first Mass in the town on November 1, 1854, in the house of Edward McKeigue, and thereafter said Mass frequently in Franklin Hall, and then in a chapel that was situated south of the High Street Cemetery. It is interesting to note that Bishop Fitzpatrick bought a lot in the town as early as September 17, 1849, "on the road leading to the New Mill."¹⁶⁵ Father Shahan in his report for 1855 said that a church was contemplated at North Danvers, and that the town should be visited, but was not because of lack of time. Father Shahan bought another lot for a church on March 3, 1857.¹⁶⁶ This was never used, for in 1859 a Universalist meeting-house was purchased, and, after being remodeled, was called the Church of the Annunciation.

In January, 1865, Father Charles Rainoni was appointed pastor. He took charge of Marblehead also.¹⁶⁷

Father Shahan also established a mission in South Reading (now Wakefield). Some of his relatives lived in Melrose, and in order to visit them it was necessary for him to wait for some time during each trip at Wakefield Junction for a train. Some of the Catholics living in the vicinity of the Junction came to know that he was a priest, and three of them finally asked him to come some day and say Mass for them. The good priest consulted Father Lyndon, of Charlestown, under whose jurisdiction South Reading came, and he gave his permission. And so it came about that in July, 1851, Father Shahan said the first Mass in the house of Malachy Kenny. The pious enthusiasm of the people can be easily estimated when it is considered that three hundred crowded into Kenny's house that day to assist at the Holy Sacrifice: the majority of these came from surrounding towns, for only fifteen Catholic families lived in South Reading.

Father Shahan bought land for a church in South Reading on February 3, 1853.¹⁶⁸ The church was completed in 1855.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁵ *Essex Deeds*, book 417, p. 201.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, book 547, p. 160.

¹⁶⁷ Father Rainoni began his duties as pastor on January 1, 1865, according to the Danvers and Marblehead *Baptismal Registers* (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

¹⁶⁸ *Middlesex Deeds*, book 645, p. 384.

¹⁶⁹ *Middlesex Journal*, Aug. 19, 1854; April 21, 1855.

In 1855, after the Malden parish was established, South Reading was attached to it as a mission.

XIII

THE LOWELL MISSION CENTRE

In contrast to the other mission centres of the Boston Diocese, Lowell was not a point from which a development of stations and missions took place, yet, with the exception of Boston, it was the greatest stronghold of Catholicity. It has been stated that there were four thousand Catholics in Lowell in 1841; how many there were during the Fitzpatrick period it is impossible to say exactly, but this much is certain, by 1850 the number had increased tremendously. The cause of this concentration is clear enough and needs no lengthy explanation: it was the development of textile mills and the necessity of living near the place of employment.

All due reservations being made for the splendid work of Father Crudden, it can be justly said that during this period two famous characters dominated the Lowell scene, Father John and Father Timothy O'Brien. Father John came to St. Patrick's in December, 1848, as pastor. In June, 1851, Father Timothy, his oldest brother, came to assist him.¹⁷⁰ Father Timothy was a scholarly man, an eloquent preacher, a genial and charitable gentleman, whose career was unfortunately cut short in 1855 by an attack of pneumonia. Father John was a dynamic personality, an excellent executive, a cultured gentleman of sympathetic disposition, yet somewhat more reserved than his brother. Memories of him still linger in Lowell, not as dim, dusty things, but vibrant with life; his personality left its stamp upon the city, and the passage of time has not destroyed it.

The outstanding achievement of Father John, from a material point of view, was the erection of a new St. Patrick's, a massive granite structure that for many years ranked amongst

¹⁷⁰ *Memoranda*, June 26, 1851; D. Hamilton Hurd, *History of Middlesex County, Massachusetts* (Philadelphia, 1888), II, 153.

the first churches in New England. It was dedicated on October 29, 1854.¹⁷¹

From Lowell a mission at North Chelmsford was developed, and for a time Nashua, New Hampshire, also was cared for. The experience of the Catholics of North Chelmsford in getting to Mass on Sundays was typical of that undergone by many of the faithful throughout the Diocese. It meant a walk of four or five miles to Lowell each Sunday in good weather and in bad, through snow and ice in the winter or along a dusty, sun-baked road in summer. Few had conveyances of any kind to make the journey; most of the people trudged along on foot to and from St. Patrick's, and glad they were to make the journey, for, though they were fully aware of the difficulties, the chance to hear Mass and receive the Sacraments far outweighed them. Finally, however, their perseverance was rewarded; an opportunity arose to secure a church. At Middlesex Village there was an old, dilapidated Unitarian meeting-house that had been unused for years. Representatives of the Catholics asked the owner to sell the building, and he agreed. Then they went to Father O'Brien and asked his approval; he readily gave it, and promised to send a priest as often as possible to say Mass. Once the meeting-house had been purchased, it was necessary to move it to a more convenient location, and so off on a two-mile journey, in the middle of the winter, across fields, through stone walls and fences, and around obstacles it went until the building rested on new foundations. Then it was thoroughly renovated, and finally on July 15, 1860, it was dedicated to St. John.¹⁷²

As to the Nashua station, it would appear that this was a matter of accommodation for Father McDonald, of Manchester, who had charge of this place. The only available source for tracing this connection is an announcement in *The Pilot* to the effect that

The Rev. Timothy O'Brien, of Lowell, will attend the Catholics of Nashua, New Hampshire, on the second Sunday of every month, commencing on Sunday the 8th of May [1853].¹⁷³

¹⁷¹ *Pilot*, Nov. 4, 1854.

¹⁷² *Memoranda*, July 15, 1860; *Pilot*, July 21, 1860.

¹⁷³ *Pilot*, April 9, 1853.

XIV

THE LAWRENCE MISSION CENTRE

Nowhere in the Diocese of Boston can a better illustration of the interrelation between the multiplication of churches and the development of industry during the period be found than at Lawrence. As this history opens, work on the dam, the largest of its kind in the world at that time, was still going on, and many Catholics were finding employment as laborers on it. It was completed on September 19, 1848.¹⁷⁴ Meanwhile, the erection of the Bay State Mills began in April, 1846, and was soon followed by the laying of the foundations of the Atlantic Mills. By February, 1848, the machinery of the Bay State Mills was operating, while at the Atlantic factory one mill was turning out goods by May, 1849, and a second by October. Later, in 1853, to mention a few more of these industries, the Pacific Mills, which grew to be one of the largest textile establishments in the world, and the Pemberton Mills were incorporated, and building operations were soon under way. The Irish labored on the construction of all these buildings, and after they were completed found work tending the machines.

On October 2, 1846, the Essex Company gave Father Ffrench a lot of land on Chestnut Street,¹⁷⁵ and on it was built a very small wooden church. It was opened on November 15, 1846.¹⁷⁶

On December 4, 1848, Father James O'Donnell was sent to Lawrence to assist the aged and infirm Father Ffrench.¹⁷⁷ He was an Augustinian. The most natural thing would have been for him to live with Father Ffrench and share his labors. But

¹⁷⁴ *History of Essex County*, I, 869.

¹⁷⁵ The original deed for this land was not recorded at this time. It is, however, referred to in a second deed given by the Essex Company to Bishop Fitzpatrick on Jan. 8, 1857. This second one is recorded in *Essex Deeds*, book 544, p. 127.

¹⁷⁶ An article in the *Merrimack Courier of Lawrence*, Jan. 27, 1847, describes the church as measuring 54 by 30 feet, and containing 46 pews. This article also says that the first service was held on Jan. 7, 1847. I base my date on a note in the *Memoranda*, Nov. 16, 1846: "Yesterday was opened the Church lately built by Rev'd Mr. Ffrench in the new city of Essex (this appears to be the name which the place will bear)."

¹⁷⁷ *Memoranda*, Dec. 4, 1848.

he chose to go off by himself and establish a second church a few blocks away from Father Ffrench's. This probably was arranged by mutual consent, and was motivated by an understandable desire of both priests to make a foundation for their respective orders in the Diocese.¹⁷⁸ Father O'Donnell's church was ready for use by March 25, 1849.¹⁷⁹

In 1850 new Dominican priests appeared on the scene. First came Father John T. McDonnell, a relative of Father Ffrench's, and then Father James H. D. Taaffe. Both came from Ireland, undoubtedly at the request of Father Ffrench, who planned to use them as the nucleus for a Dominican foundation. Father McDonnell did not stay long. Father Taaffe, however, remained, and when Father Ffrench died (January 5, 1851),¹⁸⁰ he became the pastor.

Father Taaffe and Father O'Donnell then began building campaigns that were quite out of proportion to the needs of the day. Father O'Donnell made the first move. He planned to replace his original flimsy little church with a structure of brick costing fourteen thousand dollars,¹⁸¹ but then he developed it into a granite structure requiring a much larger expenditure. This edifice was dedicated to St. Augustine on December 5, 1852.¹⁸² The title of St. Augustine's, however, was apparently never used, and it was known until 1855 as that of the Immaculate Conception.¹⁸³ The title was then changed to that of St. Mary's.¹⁸⁴ By 1857 Father O'Donnell was seeking permission to add an extension to St. Mary's.¹⁸⁵ But the Bishop hesitated to grant this request, and in fact, even as late as February 15, 1860, he decided it was not prudent, although Father O'Donnell was very insistent.¹⁸⁶ Soon after this he changed his mind. Father O'Donnell was given the necessary permission. Very soon a project was under way that turned St. Mary's into a huge

¹⁷⁸ Father Ffrench was a Dominican. ¹⁷⁹ *Memoranda*, March 19, 1849.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, Jan. 7, 1851. ¹⁸¹ *Merrimack Courier of Lawrence*, March 2, 1854.

¹⁸² *Memoranda*, Dec. 5, 1852.

¹⁸³ *Catholic Almanacs*, 1853, 1854, 1855, 1856. ¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 1857.

¹⁸⁵ Father O'Donnell, O.S.A., to Bishop Fitzpatrick, April 20, 1857 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

¹⁸⁶ *Memoranda*, Feb. 15, 1860.

structure. It became the most capacious church in the Diocese — one that would have accommodated five thousand people if it had been completely fitted with pews. The reconstruction was so radical that it was necessary to rededicate it on January 6, 1861.¹⁸⁷ Besides engaging in these building activities, Father O'Donnell bought land on a huge scale on both sides of Haverhill Street, acquiring the sites on which are located the present St. Mary's Church, the rectory, the convent, and the girls' school.

Father O'Donnell died on April 7, 1861, leaving a very involved financial situation. This arose from his practice of acting as a depository for the funds of his parishioners. He paid them a liberal rate of interest, and they in return allowed him to use the money to finance church operations.¹⁸⁸ Soon after his death, the Bishop decided to turn the parish and its missions over to the Augustinians.¹⁸⁹ In this way a second religious order of men was established in the Diocese during this episcopate.¹⁹⁰

Father James Taaffe during these years also was not too judicious in his handling of temporal affairs. In 1854 he began to build a large modified Gothic structure that was considered to be one of the finest churches in the State.¹⁹¹ This project led him also to adopt the rather reckless financial system used by Father O'Donnell. The final outcome was very unsuccessful.

Father Taaffe's church was known as that of the Immaculate Conception in 1851.¹⁹² As mentioned before, Father O'Donnell's church bore this title from 1852 to 1855 in lieu of that of St. Augustine's. Father Taaffe's church was known as St. Dominic's from 1853 to 1855.¹⁹³ When Father Taaffe's new edifice was dedicated by the Bishop on November 4, 1855, it was placed under the protection of the Immaculate Conception, instead of St. Dominic,¹⁹⁴ and Father O'Donnell's church by

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, Jan. 6, 1861.

¹⁸⁸ *Diocesan Yearly Report, 1855* (Boston Dioc. Arch.); Rev. James Healy to Very Rev. P. Stanton, O.S.A., May 13, 1861 (Boston Dioc. Arch.).

¹⁸⁹ *Sacred Heart Review*, Feb. 14, 1891.

¹⁹⁰ Very Rev. P. Stanton, O.S.A., to Rev. Gallagher, O.S.A., Nov. 8, 1864 (Boston Dioc. Arch.).

¹⁹¹ *Pilot*, Oct. 27, Nov. 24, 1855.

¹⁹² *Catholic Almanac, 1852.*

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 1854, 1855, 1856.

¹⁹⁴ *Pilot*, Nov. 24, 1855.

1856 was known as St. Mary's. Evidently this change in names from those of St. Augustine and St. Dominic, the founders of the two orders whose priests were laboring in these two Lawrence churches, was made in order to lessen emphasis on any rivalry that might have existed between the two parishes.

From Lawrence several stations were attended; of these Methuen and Andover are regularly mentioned in the *Catholic Almanacs* and *Directories*. When Father O'Donnell came to Lawrence he took over these stations. At Andover, where the people had been attending Mass in a house on Central Street, he built St. Augustine's Church. Although unfinished, it was in use by December, 1852.¹⁹⁵

South Newmarket and Exeter, New Hampshire, were served from the Immaculate Conception. When the Haverhill parish was established, these towns were attached to it. This arrangement lasted until Bishop Bacon, as head of the new Diocese of Portland, took charge of New Hampshire.

Haverhill was a station of the Immaculate Conception, Lawrence, until 1850. Mass was said here by Father Ffrench and Father O'Donnell as early as 1849 or perhaps even 1848. In August, 1850, Father John T. McDonnell, who had originally been sent to Lawrence to assist Father Ffrench, was assigned as pastor.¹⁹⁶ He bought a lot for a church on October 13, 1851.¹⁹⁷ The church was dedicated on July 4, 1852, by the Bishop, who told the following story as to why he decided to place it under the patronage of St. Gregory.

In November, 1851, an unexpected demand was made upon the Bishop to pay a note of seventeen hundred dollars. He had no money to meet this call, nor could he obtain a loan without being charged an exorbitant rate of interest. On the morning of the feast of St. Gregory (November 17th), he was in the vestry of the Cathedral reciting Matins before Mass, and he read of that incident in the Saint's life where he moved a mountain in order to build a church. The thought came to

¹⁹⁵ *Memoranda*, Dec. 6, 1852. The Bishop in his notes for this date called it "Saint Monica's."

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, Aug. 16, 1850; *Sacred Heart Review*, April 13, 1889.

¹⁹⁷ *Essex Deeds*, book 451, p. 119.

him to pray to the Saint for aid. He celebrated his Mass for this intention, and during his thanksgiving after Mass he made a particular request to the Saint to help him. After breakfast a German who had just returned from California called on the Bishop, showed him a sack containing exactly seventeen hundred dollars in gold, and asked him to keep it for him, as he was going back to California and did not wish to take the treasure with him. The Bishop explained his predicament to the German, who urged him to take the money as a loan. In this way the note was met. When Father O'Donnell came to the Bishop and asked him what name he should give to the new church, Bishop Fitzpatrick told him the story, and ordered that it should be dedicated to St. Gregory.

CHAPTER VII

THE MISSION CENTRES OF CENTRAL AND WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS

I

THE WORCESTER MISSION CENTRE

BISHOP FITZPATRICK'S FIRST PROVISIONS for the spiritual welfare of the French-Canadians were made in the Worcester parish. On October 8, 1846, Father Zéphirine Lévêque, a priest of the Quebec Diocese who had been stationed at Madawaska, asked for admission to the Boston Diocese, and thus gave the Bishop an opportunity to establish a special mission to the French-Canadians.¹ Father Lévêque came to Boston on October 23rd, and soon after the Bishop sent him off to visit Worcester and the neighboring towns, to find out how many of his countrymen were living in these places. On his return he reported the presence of about one hundred and fifty families. The Bishop placed these under his care, and "the Canadian Catholics of Manchester, N. H., and those of other places."² In this way the first French-Canadian parish of the Diocese under Bishop Fitzpatrick was established.

There is not a great deal of evidence concerning Father Lévêque's activities at this period. But this much is certain. He established himself in the old Christ's Church, Worcester, and there conducted services for the French-Canadians of the vicinity.³ It is evident also that he made some journeys throughout the Diocese, for the Bishop noted that he "labored with much zeal and success amongst the Canadians throughout the Diocese,"⁴ but evidence of only one journey remains. This

¹ *Memoranda*, Oct. 8, 1846.

² *Ibid.*, Nov. 4, 1846; cf. also, *ibid.*, Oct. 23, 1846.

³ *Ibid.*, Nov. 21, 1847. Strangely enough, there is no mention of Father Lévêque in the *Catholic Almanacs* for this period of his career in the Diocese.

⁴ *Ibid.*

consists of a letter written to the Bishop on February 15, 1847, in which he relates an arduous trip he made during January through Vermont. During this he visited Brandon, New Furnace (New Furnace?), Middlebury, Vergennes, and Montpelier; and also learned of, or met, French-Canadians who were settled at Pittsford, Castleton, Northfield, Essex, Jericho, Richmond, St. Albans, Swanton, and Highgate. From Vermont he traveled down into Rhode Island and found sixty Canadian families at Woonsocket.⁵ Soon after this, his health began to fail, and it became necessary for him to leave for a southern climate. Before he departed, he gave to the Bishop two hundred dollars which he had gathered for a new church. This money was deposited by the Bishop in a Worcester bank for the future use of Father Lévêque's congregation.⁶

The next French priest to enter the Diocese was Father Drolet, but since he was assigned to the Vermont missions his activities are discussed elsewhere. By October, 1851, Father Lévêque was back in the Diocese as pastor of the Millbury church. From this point as a headquarters he worked among his countrymen throughout the Diocese. On November 30, 1852, the Bishop admitted to the Diocese Father Napoléon Mignault, and immediately made him the pastor of Webster and the Canadians dwelling in the vicinity, including Worcester.⁷

Father Mignault soon began to plan for a new church for the Canadians at Worcester, and, therefore, bought a lot on Shrewsbury Street.⁸ In a short time there were prospects of a building project, but this was ended by the Bishop, who went to Worcester and, after having examined the plans, decided that the Canadians were attempting something that was beyond their means. He asked them to buy Christ's Church and move it to the site they had secured.⁹ They tried to purchase it, but for some reason or other were unsuccessful.¹⁰ Then they

⁵ Father Lévêque to Bishop Fitzpatrick, Feb. 15, 1847 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Memoranda*, Nov. 30, 1852; *Pilot*, Aug. 6, 1853; *Catholic Almanac*, 1854.

⁸ *Pilot*, April 23, 1853. ⁹ *Memoranda*, Feb. 7, 1853.

¹⁰ *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 847.

sought to obtain an old Protestant meeting-house on Thomas Street, but the owners refused to sell to Catholics.¹¹ There is evidence also of another plan to erect a new church after these endeavors had failed; money was collected for the purpose, but this scheme was not successful,¹² and the money that had been gathered was turned over to Father Gibson, pastor of St. John's Church.¹³

With this money, and whatever he had in the treasury, the Shrewsbury Street lot, and the prospect of generous donations from the parishioners, Father Gibson decided that it would be well to build a new church, St. John's having become too small for the congregation. Father John Boyce, who had been made co-pastor of the Worcester parish in November, 1847, did not agree with this, but felt that it would be better to enlarge the old church. Since both priests had equal authority, the result was that each began to carry out his own plan, and this certainly must have resulted in a great deal of confusion and inefficiency. Unfortunately, Father Gibson was not in the best of health, having suffered several strokes of apoplexy, and he finally had to leave the Diocese before the work was finished. After his departure the financial affairs of the new church became seriously impaired, and the mortgagees finally sold the property.¹⁴

Father John J. Power was assigned to Worcester on August 6, 1856, and he immediately started to redeem the building. Bishop Fitzpatrick gave the owner a thousand dollars, paid an overdue lumber bill, and construction work was started again.¹⁵ St. Ann's Church was dedicated on September 19, 1858, by Bishop Fitzpatrick.¹⁶

At Milford, Father Gibson had hired the Town Hall as an assembly place for the Catholics. It seems, however, that this did not please some of the non-Catholics and the permission was revoked. Later, through the intervention of certain liberal Protestants, the right to use the Town Hall was restored; in the

¹¹ *Ibid.* ¹² *Pilot*, April 23, 1853.

¹³ *The Catholic Church in New England*, *loc. cit.* ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, II, 847-848.

¹⁵ *Sacred Heart Review*, Sept. 26, 1896. ¹⁶ *Pilot*, Sept. 18, 1858.

meantime, Father Gibson had begun a building program.¹⁷ The first step was a meeting held in the house of Dominick McDevitt for the purpose of considering ways of securing the necessary financial means. A subscription list was opened and collectors were appointed to interview all the Catholics of the town. At this meeting three hundred and fifty dollars was donated, and McDevitt gave the congregation two lots of land for a church site and cemetery.¹⁸ Father Gibson did not keep this project under his care for any length of time, but turned it over to Father Boyce. The latter erected the building, and it was dedicated to St. Mary on November 4, 1849, by Bishop Fitzpatrick.¹⁹ Father Theobald Mathew, the famous temperance advocate, preached the sermon.

Milford was made a parish on February 4, 1850,²⁰ under Father George A. Hamilton. He was to maintain missions at Saxonville and Hopkinton, while stations were to be held at Cordaville, Holliston, Upton, Westboro, and Marlboro.

Saxonville was established as a parish in 1845. But in the very next year Father Peter Crudden, the pastor, was removed and sent to St. Peter's in Lowell, while Father George Riordan, of Springfield, took over Saxonville. He found it convenient to live at Worcester, midway between his two missions.²¹ Father Riordan finished the Saxonville church. It was dedicated to St. George on June 18, 1848.²² The connection with Springfield continued under Father John J. Doherty, and lasted until Father Hamilton was appointed to Milford. Then there was formed what was called the Great Milford Parish, extending from Milford to Maynard and including Saxonville. This combination, however, lasted only one year, since Father Hamilton found it too extended and preferred to divide it with his assistant, Father Edward Farrelly.²³ The new Saxonville parish

¹⁷ The account of the Town Hall affair is given in *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 788.

¹⁸ *Pilot*, Aug. 14, 1847.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, Oct. 27, 1849; *Memoranda*, Nov. 4, 1849.

²⁰ *Memoranda*, Feb. 4, 25, 1850.

²¹ Note of Father Gibson's at the end of *St. John's Baptismal Register, 1846; Saxonville Baptismal Register, 1846* (Boston Dioc. Arch.).

²² *Memoranda*, June 18, 1848.

²³ *Ibid.*, May 19, 1851; *Catholic Almanac, 1852*.

had as missions and stations Hopkinton, Framingham, Natick, Rockbottom, Stowe, Sudbury, Needham, Ashland, Weston, Wayland, and Assabet (Maynard).

Father Farrelly remained at Saxonville until 1854; he then became pastor of Milford and Saxonville was attended from there.²⁴ This arrangement was in effect until 1857. In that year Father Farrelly died on August 15th. He had accomplished great things during his few years in the priesthood. He was a very young man when he passed away, not having reached his thirtieth year. Undoubtedly his life was shortened by the hard toil and constant exposure in building up the great array of missions under his care. He was dearly beloved by the people, and for years traditions of him lingered amongst those who had been in his charge.²⁵

Father Patrick Cuddihy succeeded Father Farrelly. Saxonville was separated from Milford and reëstablished as a parish under Father John Walsh. The Saxonville parish now included so much territory that it could well have been called the Great Saxonville Parish. Father Walsh was another grand character whose labors during his years at Saxonville were truly heroic.

At Medway, Father Michael Carraher, a curate of SS. Peter and Paul's Church, South Boston, seems to have gathered the people for Mass during the years 1855-1857. Father Cuddihy continued this custom, saying Mass monthly in the home of James Kenney. In February, 1859, he told the Bishop that a church should be built in Medway.²⁶ On October 25, 1859, the pastor secured a site, of which, however, no use seems to have been made.²⁷ The congregation rented a former school building instead, and finally bought it on January 30, 1863.²⁸ This was remodeled, and was known as St. Clare's Church.

Father Gibson and Father Boyce both attended Hopkinton,

²⁴ *Catholic Almanac, 1852; Diocesan Yearly Report, 1856* (Boston Dioc. Arch.); *Pilot*, Aug. 29, 1857.

²⁵ See an undated note in the *Memoranda*, at the end of 1857; *Pilot*, Aug. 29, 1857; Rev. Patrick Bowen Murphy, *Fifty Years of Catholic Faith and Historical Sketch of St. George's Church, Saxonville, Mass.* (Worcester, 1897), p. 16.

²⁶ *Memoranda*, Feb. 14, 1859.

²⁷ *Norfolk Deeds*, book 281, p. 309.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, book 312, p. 82.

saying Mass in the home of John McDonough.²⁹ In November, 1849, a movement to build a church was started by John Wilson, a manufacturer and a Protestant. He called a meeting and urged the Catholics to get this project under way. A site for a church on Cedar Street was bought from Eliakim Bates.³⁰ Father McGrath, Father Hamilton's assistant, was given special charge of this town and Uxbridge.³¹ Father McGrath's health failed, and Father Farrelly was sent to take Father McGrath's place in February, 1851.³² In a few months, as has been related, Father Farrelly became the pastor of the Saxonville parish and Hopkinton was one of its stations. Father Farrelly built St. Malachy's Church in 1851 on the Cedar Street lot, and the Bishop dedicated it on Sunday, September 21st of that year.³³ When Father Farrelly went to Milford, St. Malachy's became a mission of this parish. It remained under this jurisdiction during the period.

Some time in the latter part of 1850, Father Hamilton of Milford celebrated the first Mass in Marlboro.³⁴ Then, when Father Farrelly came to assist Father Hamilton, he was given charge of this station. Father Farrelly said his first Mass here on March 17, 1851.³⁵ There is no evidence as to where this Mass was said. One author relates that it took place in the open air,³⁶ but this seems to be very improbable in view of the fact that it was winter. Very likely it was celebrated in some private home. In September, 1852, the Catholics of the town held a meeting for the purpose of discussing the raising of money to build a church.³⁷ It was a difficult task to secure the necessary funds, and a satisfactory lot was not bought until July 12, 1854.³⁸ On this the church was built. It was dedicated to the Immaculate Conception on August 7, 1855.³⁹

²⁹ *The Catholic Church in New England*, I, 768.

³⁰ *Middlesex Deeds*, book 574, p. 125. Bates sold the land for \$200.

³¹ It was not a parish. ³² *Memoranda*, Feb. 20, 1851.

³³ *Ibid.*, Sept. 21, 1851. ³⁴ *Pilot*, Oct. 2, 1852.

³⁵ Note at the head of the first *Baptismal Register*, Immaculate Conception Church (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

³⁶ *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 241.

³⁷ *Pilot*, loc. cit. ³⁸ *Middlesex Deeds*, book 687, p. 374.

³⁹ *Pilot*, Aug. 18, 1855.

Marlboro, of course, became a station of Saxonville when Father Farrelly was appointed pastor of this town. When Father Farrelly took charge of Milford, he retained the care of Marlboro. The reëstablishment of the Saxonville parish brought Marlboro within its jurisdiction. In January, 1864, Marlboro was made a parish under Father John A. Conlon.

On February 25, 1850, Father Hamilton reported to the Bishop that a number of Catholics were living in South Natick, and had informed him that they desired to build a church.⁴⁰ Nothing came of this, but it would seem probable that he said Mass there from time to time. Father Walsh, when pastor of Saxonville, visited South Natick very frequently; in fact, this was one of his most important stations.⁴¹

Various priests stationed in this territory said Mass in Natick, but nothing was done about securing a place of worship until Father Walsh took charge. He purchased an old Universalist meeting-house on East Central Street in 1860,⁴² and placed it under the protection of St. Patrick.⁴³

The town of Millbury had been visited for many years by the pastors of Worcester. On June 13, 1850, Father Gibson called a meeting of the Catholic inhabitants, and it was decided to erect a church on land that had been donated by Michael Coogan.⁴⁴ Soon after this, construction work began. On October 2, 1851, a special train brought the Bishop, twelve priests, and a large number of Catholics from Worcester for the dedication of the new edifice to St. Bridget.⁴⁵ This was the church to which Father Lévêque was appointed pastor after his return to the Diocese. He, however, did not take up residence here, but moved around the Worcester territory and into other parts of the Diocese ministering to the Canadians. But misfortune soon overtook this foundation as is related in

⁴⁰ *Memoranda*, Feb. 25, 1850.

⁴¹ See the *Baptismal Registers*, St. George's Church, Saxonville (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁴² *Middlesex Deeds*, book 850, p. 584. It was bought on Dec. 12, 1860.

⁴³ *Pilot*, Jan. 5, 1861.

⁴⁴ *Sacred Heart Review*, Nov. 21, 1896; *Pilot*, Oct. 25, 1851.

⁴⁵ *Memoranda*, Oct. 2, 1851.

the following paragraphs; the parish was abandoned and St. Bridget's was placed under the care of the pastor at Uxbridge.⁴⁶

The misfortune just referred to took place in the Millbury mission station of Spencer and arose from the method used to raise money to build a church. Father Lévêque began this project in March, 1853,⁴⁷ and the people, because their means were scanty, mortgaged their houses to the builders as security for the payment of the contract.⁴⁸ When these gentlemen had completed Our Lady of the Rosary Church, they demanded that the mortgages be liquidated. But the people were unable to raise the money and were forced to dispose of their property to satisfy the builders' demands. Heartbroken by this calamity, Father Lévêque gave up his parish and started out on a collection tour. He was able to gather enough money to repay a portion of the people's losses and provided for the balance by arranging for a diversion of the revenues to them until all had been repaid.⁴⁹ After having made this heroic effort, the good priest's health was completely wrecked and he was forced to leave the Diocese. Spencer was then attached to Webster.⁵⁰

While pastor of Millbury, Father Lévêque attended the people at Grafton. The usual Catholic history of this town relates that in 1848 a Mr. Benchley gave the people a site for a church, and Father Gibson began the construction of St. Philip's.⁵¹ There are, however, other facts at variance with this account. It should be understood that Father Gibson was accustomed to set down in the *Baptismal Register* of St. John's Church at the end of each year the stations he had attended. He also kept a *County Book* in which similar notes are to be found. Grafton is not mentioned in either of these sources until 1851.⁵² At the end of 1852 he wrote that the first steps had been taken to erect a church, a lot had been bought, and

⁴⁶ *Catholic Almanac*, 1855. ⁴⁷ *Pilot*, March 19, 1853.

⁴⁸ *Sacred Heart Review*, Nov. 21, 1896.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*; *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 807-808.

⁵⁰ *Catholic Almanac*, 1855.

⁵¹ *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 778; *Sacred Heart Review*, Nov. 21, 1896.

⁵² St. John's Church, Worcester, *Baptismal Register*, 1851.

money was being raised.⁵³ In 1854 he set down in his *County Book* that St. Mark's Church at Grafton had not yet been finished, but the foundations had been dug. No further mention of this project was made by him, but its history may be followed in other sources. In *The Pilot* of April 22, 1854, there is a letter to this effect:

Mr. Justice Eddy, of Millbury, has given a lot of land to the Catholics of this town, for the purpose of building a church thereon, worth \$200. It is situated on the most healthy and desirable part of the town. The faithful members of the church have combined together, and laid the foundations last Wednesday.

The church building, however, had not been started at the time that Father Gibson left Worcester. There is a copy of a letter written to A. L. Buckley, of Worcester, by the Bishop, dated April 29, 1856, in the Boston Diocese Archives, in which he states that he cannot give his attention to the construction of the church at Grafton nor assume any responsibility for it. The Bishop concluded by suggesting that further building operations should be suspended until he had appointed someone to take Father Gibson's place. The church was finally started by Father Edward Sheridan, pastor of Uxbridge, who took charge of the station after Father Gibson.⁵⁴ It was finished by Father John J. Power, pastor of St. Ann's, Worcester, who received the care of Grafton in 1859.⁵⁵ Bishop Fitzpatrick dedicated the church to St. Philip Benizi on September 4, 1861.⁵⁶

Father Gibson said Mass in Webster some time in 1846,⁵⁷ and continued to do so from time to time. The Jesuits also visited the town, both Father William Logan and Father Peter Blenkinsop including it in their missionary travels out of Holy Cross College.⁵⁸ In 1851, Father Gibson began to erect a

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 1852.

⁵⁴ *Catholic Almanac*, 1857; *Episcopal Register*, Sept. 4, 1861 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁵⁵ *Catholic Almanac*, 1860; *Episcopal Register*, loc. cit. (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* ⁵⁷ St. John's Church, Worcester, *Baptismal Register*, 1846.

⁵⁸ *Sacred Heart Review*, Jan. 16, 1897.

church, the men of the parish digging the foundations on a lot given by J. S. Canny. The cornerstone of this new church was laid by Bishop Fitzpatrick on October 9, 1851.⁵⁹

On November 30, 1852, Father Napoléon Mignault came into the Diocese, as has been mentioned, and was assigned to Webster.⁶⁰ He finished the construction of the church and arranged for the Bishop to dedicate it on September 25, 1853, to St. Louis. The Bishop went to Worcester on the day before to prepare for the ceremony, but on his arrival he found a telegram informing him that Monsignor Bedini, the Papal Nuncio, had arrived in Boston.⁶¹ This caused him to change his plans and return to receive his distinguished guest.

Among the towns cared for from Webster were Spencer, Southbridge, the Brookfields, Oxford, Barre, Leicester, Warren, Clappville, Dudley, New Braintree, and Manchaug.

Spencer has already been discussed. Southbridge and Leicester are discussed under the Holy Cross College missions. At Barre there was a church erected in 1856,⁶² and dedicated to St. Joseph. Father Gibson, it should be noted, was visiting Barre as early as 1846.⁶³ At Oxford, where Father Gibson said Mass as early as 1851,⁶⁴ Father Mignault built St. Roch's Church in 1856.⁶⁵ According to a report made by him in 1856, he said Mass at Oxford and North Oxford once a month, at each of the Brookfields once every six weeks, at Warren and New Braintree twice a year.⁶⁶

Father Mignault left Webster about August, 1858, for the Milwaukee Diocese, and was succeeded by Father James Quan.⁶⁷

The progress of the Church in Fitchburg was, for many years, not a happy one. Father Gibson was forced to start the construction of a church here because the town authorities refused to allow the Catholics to use the Town Hall.⁶⁸ It was a

⁵⁹ *Memoranda*, Oct. 9, 1851.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, Nov. 30, 1852.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, Sept. 24, 1853.

⁶² *Catholic Almanac*, 1857.

⁶³ St. John's Church, Worcester, *Baptismal Register*, 1846.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 1851.

⁶⁵ *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 799.

⁶⁶ *Diocesan Yearly Report*, 1856 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁶⁷ *Catholic Almanac*, 1859; *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 816.

⁶⁸ *Catholic Observer*, May 31, 1848.

very hastily built affair, made from lumber salvaged from some shanties. For this reason it was called "Shanty Cathedral." Some rowdies smashed the windows in it. Each of the selectmen immediately offered a reward for the apprehension of the culprits and a Protestant gentleman collected sufficient money to repair the damage.⁶⁹ This temporary church was erected in 1848. Soon after it was completed, a permanent edifice was begun. Father Gibson managed to get the basement finished, but he was then obliged to stop the work because the congregation became disunited and neglected to give him the necessary support.⁷⁰ He then had a roof built over the completed section and this was used as a church for several years.

In January, 1850, Father Gibson informed the Bishop that the proprietors of a Protestant meeting-house had offered to sell it to him.⁷¹ The Bishop went to Fitchburg, inspected the building, and evidently decided that it was not suitable.

On March 6, 1852, the roof was blown off the church by a high wind. A few days later, an article appeared in *The Pilot* describing the misfortunes of the congregation and urging the people to get to work and raise a new place of worship. This had a good effect, and, with the aid of Alvah Crocker, Joseph Mansur, and several other Protestants, the superstructure on the existing basement was soon completed.⁷² The Bishop dedicated the church to St. Bernard on September 12, 1852.⁷³ In January, 1856, Fitchburg became a parish under Father Edward Turpin.⁷⁴

Fitchburg had a long list of stations: Templeton, Leominster, Athol, Groton, Winchendon, West Boylston, Holden, Gardner, Ashburnham, Townsend, Shirley, Princeton, and Fitzwilliam, Mason, and Jaffrey, New Hampshire.⁷⁵

At North Leominster an old Baptist meeting-house was bought by Father Gibson about December, 1852,⁷⁶ and was converted into St. Leo's Church for the use of the people living

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* ⁷⁰ *Pilot*, March 13, 1852. ⁷¹ *Memoranda*, Jan. 7, 1850.

⁷² *Pilot*, Sept. 25, 1852. ⁷³ *Memoranda*, Sept. 12, 1852.

⁷⁴ *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 765.

⁷⁵ *Diocesan Yearly Report, 1856* (Boston Dioc. Arch.).

⁷⁶ *Memoranda*, Dec. 8, 1852; *Pilot*, Dec. 18, 1852.

in the vicinity. This mission was transferred to Fitchburg in 1856. Templeton was first visited by Father Gibson in 1845. By 1852 he had purchased a lot for a church in Jonesville.⁷⁷ This village, it should be noted, was also known as Otter River. The name Templeton is used here because it is the one found in the official records of the period. The first Mass was said in this church on September 11, 1853.⁷⁸ It was dedicated to St. Martin by the Bishop on February 11, 1855.⁷⁹ Father Thomas H. Bannon became pastor in 1864, with Athol as a mission and Winchendon and the Brookfields as stations.

When Bishop Fitzpatrick became the Bishop of Boston, Father Gibson was already visiting Athol.⁸⁰ On February 1, 1855, he asked the Bishop's permission to buy a Protestant meeting-house in the town.⁸¹ The Bishop consented.⁸² It was dedicated to St. Catherine on August 26, 1855.⁸³ Father Edward Turpin received the care of this mission when he became pastor of Fitchburg.⁸⁴ Later, as already stated, it was transferred to the jurisdiction of Templeton.

From his own funds Father Turpin bought a lot of land in Groton for a church in 1856.⁸⁵ In 1858 St. Mary's was built by two Protestants, Thomas H. Page and Alfred Page, manufacturers who probably wanted to please or to hold their Catholic employees.⁸⁶ This church was erected at what was then called Groton Junction and is now the town of Ayer.

Father Gibson was in Winchendon on August 18, 1846,⁸⁷ and he may very well have said Mass in this town on that day. It is also likely that Father Daly, of Claremont, New Hampshire, said Mass here in 1847.⁸⁸ By 1848 Father Gibson was visiting Winchendon regularly.⁸⁹ In 1856 he purchased a barn

⁷⁷ *Pilot*, Feb. 12, 1853. ⁷⁸ *Memoranda*, Sept. 21, 1853.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, Feb. 11, 1855.

⁸⁰ St. John's Church, Worcester, *Baptismal Register*, 1845-1846.

⁸¹ *Memoranda*, Feb. 1, 1855.

⁸² *Diocesan Yearly Report*, 1856 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁸³ *Episcopal Register*, Aug. 26, 1855 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁸⁴ *Catholic Almanac*, 1857. ⁸⁵ *Middlesex Deeds*, book 754, p. 288.

⁸⁶ *History of Middlesex County*, II, 672.

⁸⁷ St. John's Church, Worcester, *Baptismal Register*, 1846.

⁸⁸ *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 829.

⁸⁹ St. John's Church, Worcester, *Baptismal Register*, 1848.

and converted it into a chapel called St. Elizabeth's.⁹⁰ It was so lacking in the necessary fittings that he had to use a parishioner's house for confessions. As a matter of fact, many of these mission churches that are mentioned were barely equipped, oftentimes containing only a few rough benches and a crude altar. All other articles, even candlesticks, had to be borrowed from other, and more opulent, churches. When Father Turpin took charge, he remodeled the barn in 1857⁹¹ and made a becoming building out of it. He kept this mission until Templeton became a parish; Father Bannon then looked after it.

The Catholic people of Holden, although few in number, desired to have a priest visit them and notified the Bishop of this in 1850. Father Gibson came and by 1852 was attending them once every six weeks.⁹²

Father Turpin inaugurated the station at Gardner, saying the first Mass in a grove in 1856. Gardner was attached to Templeton in 1864, and Father Bannon commenced to use the Town Hall.⁹³

The last parish to be cut off from Worcester was that of Clinton. This town is first mentioned by Father Gibson in the *Baptismal Register of St. John's Church* for 1847. When Father Boyce came to Worcester, the care of this place passed to him and he built St. John's Church. It was dedicated in October, 1850.⁹⁴ Father John J. Connolly succeeded Father Boyce and became the first pastor on December 1, 1862.⁹⁵ Clinton had West Boylston as a mission. Father Gibson first gave this town regular attention. In 1853 he began to build St. Luke's Church. Father Lévêque finished it in 1854. When he left the Diocese, Father Gibson once more assumed the care of this mission. Father Boyce succeeded him and attended the people until Clinton became a parish.⁹⁶

⁹⁰*Diocesan Yearly Report, 1856 (Boston Dioc. Arch.).*

⁹¹*Ibid.*, 1857.

⁹²*Sacred Heart Review*, Nov. 21, 1896; *St. John's Church, Worcester, Baptismal Register*, and *County Book*.

⁹³*Sacred Heart Review*, Aug. 21, 1897.

⁹⁴*St. John's Church, Worcester, Baptismal Register, 1850.*

⁹⁵*Episcopal Register*, Dec. 1, 1862 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁹⁶*The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 745.

The Jesuits of Holy Cross College were often of great aid to the Bishop in taking care of the needs of the people, for not only did they journey around the Diocese filling in at parishes when needed, but they also assumed charge of certain stations and missions, and to some extent cared for the French around Worcester. Father Logan, S.J., journeyed regularly to towns as far south as New London, Connecticut. At the opening of the period he was saying Mass at Southbridge, and Father Boyce, after he was assigned to St. John's, Worcester, also attended this station, whose congregation was made up principally of railroad workers.⁹⁷ In May, 1852, a committee began to raise money for a church. William Edwards donated the land. Father Boyce supervised the construction. On May 1, 1853, the church was dedicated to St. Peter by Bishop Fitzpatrick.⁹⁸ After this, Father Peter Blenkinsop, S.J., took charge until 1854, when the mission came under the direction of Father Peter Kroes, S.J. This Southbridge mission was turned over to Father James Quan, of Webster, in 1858, the Jesuits receiving in exchange the Spencer mission.

Father Thomas Sheerin, S.J., attempted to start a movement to build a new church at Spencer in 1864, but the people failed to support it.⁹⁹ Father Livius Vigilante, S.J., followed Father Sheerin in September, 1864, and, still keeping alive the project of a new Church of Our Lady of the Rosary, bought additional land in 1865.

The Leicester mission, composed in 1846 principally of farmers, was attached to St. John's, Worcester, until 1854, when it was transferred to Webster;¹⁰⁰ in 1856 it passed officially to Holy Cross College.¹⁰¹

The author of the account in *The Catholic Church in New England* says that in 1851 the Catholics at Leicester were able

⁹⁷ *Sacred Heart Review*, Jan. 16, 1897; St. John's Church, Worcester, *Baptismal Register*, 1846.

⁹⁸ *Memoranda*, May 1, 1853.

⁹⁹ Recall the unfortunate experience they had under Father Lévêque.

¹⁰⁰ *Catholic Almanac*, 1855. But the *Baptismal Register*, St. John's, Worcester, shows calls at Leicester in 1855.

¹⁰¹ *Catholic Almanac*, 1857.

to secure the use of the Town Hall and Mass was said there once a month by the Jesuits.¹⁰² In 1852 Rev. John Nelson, a Congregationalist minister, encouraged the Catholics to build a church; and on January 26, 1853, a meeting was held at which Father Gibson presided, and it was decided to erect one. This edifice, named St. Polycarp's, was opened on January 1, 1855, by Father Kroes, S.J., of Holy Cross College.

II

THE SPRINGFIELD MISSION CENTRE

The Baptist meeting-house at Springfield was dedicated to St. Benedict on Sunday, February 14, 1847, by Bishop Fitzpatrick.¹⁰³ Springfield was the centre of the mission, but its wide-flung stations made it more convenient for Father George T. Riordan to live at Worcester, from whence he had charge of Saxonville, Framingham, Natick, Westboro, Ware, and Indian Orchard.¹⁰⁴ As noted, however, in the history of the Worcester parish, some of these towns were actually attended by Father Gibson. Father Riordan was transferred from Springfield to Cambridge in November, 1848, and Father John J. Doherty was the first pastor to reside at Springfield.¹⁰⁵

In June, 1851, certain wretches attempted to befoul the reputation of this excellent priest and extort money from him. They failed, but the experience was so calamitous that Father Doherty was given permission to leave the Diocese.¹⁰⁶ No priest was available to take his place, and Springfield passed to the care of Chicopee until November 24, 1856, when Father Michael P. Gallagher, of St. Vincent's, Boston, was appointed pastor.¹⁰⁷ The assumption of the care of Springfield by Father Blenkinsop, of Chicopee, transferred the charge of the stations to that parish. When the reëstablishment was made, inter-

¹⁰² *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 782.

¹⁰³ *Memoranda*, Feb. 12 ff., 1847. ¹⁰⁴ *Catholic Observer*, March 22, 1849.

¹⁰⁵ *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 687.

¹⁰⁶ *Memoranda*, June 2, 13, 16, 1851.

¹⁰⁷ *Sacred Heart Review*, June 22, 1895; *Memoranda*, Nov. 24, 1856.

vening developments made it unnecessary to reassign them to the mother-parish, and for the rest of the period only one station, Chester Village, appears in the official lists.¹⁰⁸

Father Gallagher found that a sizable growth in the members of the congregation had taken place, and in January, 1860, he bought a magnificent piece of property for a new church. The new edifice was opened on December 27, 1861.¹⁰⁹ This truly was an achievement. Not more than a dozen years before there was only a handful of Catholics in Springfield, yet now the Catholics were ready and willing to assume the burden of paying for a church that cost seventy-five thousand dollars. So great, indeed, was their spirit that within five years the debt had been liquidated and St. Michael's was ready for consecration. Later, when Springfield became the see of a new diocese, St. Michael's Church became the Cathedral, a distinction that still belongs to it.

III

THE CHICOPEE (CABOTVILLE) MISSION CENTRE

Father John D. Brady died while making the diocesan clergy retreat in October, 1847, and was succeeded by that stormy petrel, Father James Strain. Once again this thoroughly zealous, but utterly tactless, man became involved in trouble with his parishioners, and the Bishop finally had to remove him in September, 1850, and send Father William Blenkinsop to replace him.

Father Blenkinsop built a new church, and the Bishop dedicated it to the Most Holy Name of Jesus on May 29, 1859.¹¹⁰ This was the one hundredth church built under P. C. Keeley in the United States. Describing this new addition to the Diocese the Bishop wrote:

The whole is the fruit of the quick and persevering zeal of Rev. William Blenkinsop, the pastor of the place, who for

¹⁰⁸ See the *Catholic Almanacs* and *Catholic Directories*.

¹⁰⁹ *Sacred Heart Review*, *loc. cit.*; *Pilot*, Oct. 5, 1861; Jan. 4, 1862.

¹¹⁰ *Memoranda*, May 29, 1859.

the last nine or ten years has been working silently for this and without shew or ostentation until the whole has been completed. An evidence of what a good priest can do. For his people are of the poorest class of operatives in the factories, and the parish, when he took charge of it, was in a distracted state teeming with dissension and its like.¹¹¹

In regard to this dedication it is said that the sermon of the day on the "Infallibility of the Church" and the brass band on the Sabbath were severely criticized by correspondents in the press.¹¹² This was not the impression that the Bishop received, at least immediately after the ceremony, for he wrote:

All the newspapers, even the most anti-Catholic, speak highly of the ceremony of yesterday and declare it to be the most solemn and interesting in that part of the country. The inconsistency of Protestants! They take an interest in things of which they understand nothing. Their senses are gratified, the eyes by fine sights, the ears by fine sounds, and that is enough.¹¹³

Father Blenkinsop built a church (St. William's) at Ware in 1853.¹¹⁴ It was dedicated on July 1, 1855.¹¹⁵ At Westfield he erected St. Mary's Church in 1854; this church was opened on December 24, 1854.¹¹⁶ A small Protestant meeting-house was purchased by him at Thorndike about June, 1853,¹¹⁷ and was placed under the protection of St. Ann by the Bishop on July 1, 1855.¹¹⁸ The date of the first Mass at Holyoke is uncertain, none of the available sources giving any clue. Irish laborers, however, came to Holyoke in great numbers in 1847 to work on the Hadley Falls dam, and Father Strain did say Mass for them late in 1847.¹¹⁹ The first mention of Holyoke in any

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, May 29, 1859. ¹¹² *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 655.

¹¹³ *Memoranda*, May 30, 1859.

¹¹⁴ I base this date on the fact that the *Catholic Almanac* for 1854 locates a St. William's Church at Ware. The *Diocesan Yearly Report* for 1856 notes under Chicopee: "Saint William's, Ware."

¹¹⁵ *Episcopal Register*, July 1, 1855 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

¹¹⁶ *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 703.

¹¹⁷ *Memoranda*, June 28, 1853.

¹¹⁸ *Episcopal Register*, loc. cit. (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

¹¹⁹ *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 669.

official list occurs in the *Catholic Almanac* for 1853, where it appears as a mission of St. Mary's, Northampton, under Father P. Conlan. Father Blenkinsop probably began to visit Amherst in 1853,¹²⁰ and by 1856 was saying Mass here once a month.¹²¹ It was Father Bernard O'Cavanagh's privilege to say the first Mass at West Stockbridge in the house of Michael Stanton in 1848.¹²² Greenfield was being visited by 1853; likewise Chester Factories, Monson, Palmer, and Indian Orchard.¹²³ In 1854 Three Rivers and Duckville were added to this list of stations.

In 1850, Pittsfield was separated from Chicopee taking with it numerous stations, and was placed under the care of Father O'Cavanagh.¹²⁴ He was a kind-hearted and energetic priest who traveled far and wide throughout the Berkshire country in search of those to whom he could minister. But he did not stay here too long, and in 1852 he was removed, and Father Patrick Cuddihy was appointed to the parish on November 29, 1852.¹²⁵ Father Cuddihy, of course, dominated the Pittsfield scene for five years by sheer force of character, ability, and culture.

The parish developed slowly in the sense that there was no startling increase in the number of parishioners, and it was not until 1863 that the need of a new church was felt. Then land was bought by Father Edward Purcell, who succeeded Father Cuddihy (1857) in March, 1863, and the cornerstone was laid by the Vicar-General, Father John Williams, on August 28, 1864.¹²⁶

Outside of Pittsfield, in the surrounding towns (the parish lines reached to the New York border), a quite impressive de-

¹²⁰ The first mention of this station occurs in the *Catholic Almanac*, 1854.

¹²¹ *Diocesan Yearly Report*, 1856 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

¹²² *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 646.

¹²³ *Catholic Almanac*, 1854.

¹²⁴ *Catholic Almanac*, 1851. This is the first issue in which Pittsfield appears as a parish.

¹²⁵ *Memoranda*, Nov. 29, 1852; *Pilot*, Dec. 4, 1852. I do not know the exact date of Father O'Cavanagh's dismissal, but imagine it was early in 1852, since *The Pilot* said: "Our Rt. Rev. Bishop has been long wishing to get an energetic clergyman for this mission."

¹²⁶ *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 640. There is a very interesting account of Catholicity in Pittsfield in: K. F. Mullaney, *Catholic Pittsfield and Berkshire* (Pittsfield, 1897).

velopment took place. An old Methodist church was purchased at North Adams in 1853. This town formerly had been a mission of Middlebury, Vermont.¹²⁷ The church was dedicated to St. Francis.¹²⁸ Much earlier than this, however, the Catholics of North Adams bought a piece of land for a church. This happened in 1847. The site was purchased from Joseph D. Clark for eight hundred dollars. Nothing seems to have been done with this lot.¹²⁹ In 1862 or 1863 North Adams became an independent parish under Father Charles Lynch. The date of his appointment is not quite certain. It definitely took place before the summer of 1863. The generally accepted date is November, 1862.¹³⁰ At Great Barrington the Church of St. Peter was built by Father Cuddihy in 1853.¹³¹ Great Barrington became a mission of North Lee in 1857 and a parish in January, 1864. Father Peter Menietti was the first pastor.¹³² The commencement of the station at Williamstown is obscure. Tradition says that Father O'Cavanagh read Mass here, and it seems to be certain that Father Cuddihy officiated in the town. The first definite date is 1859, when Father Edward Purcell offered up the Holy Sacrifice in the house of Thomas McMahon.¹³³ Strangely enough, no note is made of Williamstown in the *Catholic Almanacs* or *Directories*, nor in the *Diocesan Yearly Reports*. At Hinsdale, Father Edward Purcell built St. Patrick's Church either in the late part of 1859 or the early weeks of 1860.¹³⁴ Several other stations are also mentioned as being attended from Pittsfield. North Becket appears in the *Catholic Almanac* for 1856, and there is a note that land had been bought for a church. Father Cuddihy was going to Mill River

¹²⁷ *Catholic Almanac, 1854; The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 621, gives 1856. This date does not agree with the *Catholic Almanac*. In the *Diocesan Yearly Report, 1856*, Father Cuddihy reported that the church at North Adams was falling down.

¹²⁸ *Catholic Almanac, 1854*.

¹²⁹ *Memoranda*, Jan. 16, 1847; The Catholics of North Adams to Bishop Fitzpatrick, March 9, 1847 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

¹³⁰ W. F. Spear, *History of North Adams, Massachusetts, 1749-1855* (1855), p. 57.

¹³¹ *Memoranda*, Jan. 28, 1853; John G. Holland, *History of Western Massachusetts* (Springfield, 1855), II, 454.

¹³² *Episcopal Register*, Jan. 6, 1864 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*). Father Menietti was appointed pastor on Jan. 6, 1864.

¹³³ *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 647.

¹³⁴ *Episcopal Register*, Feb., 1860 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

by 1855,¹³⁵ and by 1856 had included Chester Village and Chester Factories in his stations.¹³⁶

At North Lee, where a Father Enright said the first Mass of certain date in May, 1850, Father Cuddihy began to build St. Mary's Church in 1856. Father Peter Egan was appointed the pastor of North Lee in 1857. He completed the church. It was dedicated on June 3, 1860.¹³⁷ The only development amongst the stations attached to this place was at Stockbridge in 1860, where the Church of the Annunciation was started,¹³⁸ and at Mill River, where a church lot was bought.¹³⁹

A misstatement that is commonly made in regard to the missions of the Chicopee district is that Northampton did not become a parish until 1866; actually it became a parish in 1851 under Father P. Conlan.¹⁴⁰ He had as stations Holyoke, Greenfield, and other towns.¹⁴¹ For some reason or other this new establishment did not last very long, and by 1853 Northampton was attached once more to Chicopee.¹⁴² While Father Conlan was at Northampton he purchased a lot of land at Greenfield and prepared to build a church.¹⁴³ Nothing further seems to have been done about this.

Northampton remained under Chicopee until 1854; then Father Jeremiah O'Callaghan, of what was now the Burlington Diocese, came back to his old Diocese and was sent to Northampton. He stayed here until 1855, and then, having commenced in 1855 to design the future St. Jerome's Church at Holyoke with P. C. Keeley, he moved to Holyoke so as to be

¹³⁵ *Catholic Almanac*, 1856.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 1857.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 1857, 1858, 1859; *Episcopal Register*, June 3, 1860 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

¹³⁸ *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 646. I use the title "Church of the Annunciation" because it is the one given in the *Catholic Directories*.

¹³⁹ *Diocesan Yearly Report*, 1865 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

¹⁴⁰ The evidence for this can be found in the *Memoranda*: "Rev. Mr. Blenkinsop of Cabotville arrives. . . . He ceases to have the care of Northampton and the adjoining stations" (Sept. 2, 1851). "Rev. Mr. Conlan arrives from Northampton to give an account of his new mission" (Oct. 7, 1851).

¹⁴¹ For Holyoke see the *Catholic Almanac*, 1852. For Greenfield see the *Memoranda*, Jan. 14, 1852.

¹⁴² List of parishes and missions at the end of 1853 in the *Memoranda* and the *Catholic Almanac*, 1854.

¹⁴³ *Memoranda*, Jan. 14, 1852.

near the scene of this important construction work. But Northampton officially was still the parish. Finally, in 1856, Holyoke was designated as the centre and Northampton became a mission.

Mass had been said at Holyoke for many years in Exchange Hall and Father O'Callaghan continued this custom.¹⁴⁴ Construction work on the new church was started in May, 1856, on land donated by the Hadley Falls Company.¹⁴⁵ After its completion (probably in 1857), the edifice was used for several years without having been dedicated. The Bishop placed it under the patronage of St. Jerome on June 17, 1860.¹⁴⁶

Meanwhile, in 1858 Father James F. Sullivan had been sent to Holyoke,¹⁴⁷ and since Father O'Callaghan had become more or less incapacitated, Father Sullivan took charge of the parish.¹⁴⁸ This change became effective on April 4th. Father O'Callaghan continued to live in Holyoke until his death on February 23, 1861.¹⁴⁹

Father Sullivan renovated the old church of St. Mary's at Northampton and enlarged it to about twice its original size. The new building was dedicated on March 11, 1860.¹⁵⁰

From this centre a great number of stations were attended. There is a tradition that Mass was said in Florence in 1851 by some missionary,¹⁵¹ but the first definite mention of the town as a place of call is in the *Diocesan Yearly Report* for 1856, where Father O'Callaghan notes that he visited it once a year. Haydensville was an old stopping-place for missionaries; Father O'Callaghan said Mass here once a year.¹⁵² Greenfield, originally a station of Vermont, was attended by Father O'Callaghan once a month; he received this station from Chicopee.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁴ *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 669.

¹⁴⁵ For the Hadley Falls Company's donation see *The Pilot*, May 24, 1856. For the starting of construction work see *Memoranda*, May 20, 1856.

¹⁴⁶ *Memoranda*, June 17, 1860. This date will be found under June 9, 1860.

¹⁴⁷ *Metropolitan Catholic Almanac*, 1859; his location is found in the directory of Catholic clergymen.

¹⁴⁸ *Pilot*, April 17, 1858.

¹⁴⁹ *Memoranda*, Feb. 23, 1861.

¹⁵⁰ *Memoranda*, March 11, 1860. The old church had never been dedicated.

¹⁵¹ *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 721.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, II, 723-724; *Diocesan Yearly Report*, 1856 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

¹⁵³ *Diocesan Yearly Report*, 1856.

Amherst, Conway, and Shelburne Falls were visited every three months; Bensonville, Hatfield, Sunderland, and Hadley once a year.¹⁵⁴

The association between Holyoke and Northampton was broken on January 22, 1866, when Father P. V. Moyce, of Monson, was sent to the latter town as pastor, with Florence, Greenfield, Amherst, and Haydensville as stations.¹⁵⁵ Father Patrick J. Harkins took charge of the Holyoke parish.

Father Patrick Healy became the first pastor of Ware. His appointment took place on March 20, 1860.¹⁵⁶ He attended stations at Warren, Duckville, Three Rivers, Monson, and missions at Palmer and Thorndike.¹⁵⁷ St. Patrick's Church at Monson was built by him, and was dedicated on August 14, 1864.¹⁵⁸ Monson was made a parish soon after this under Father P. V. Moyce with Thorndike, a village in Palmer, as a mission.¹⁵⁹ The pastor stayed until January 22, 1866, and was then moved to the parish at Northampton, and Father Francis Lasco took his place.¹⁶⁰ Father Lasco died on March 3, 1866,¹⁶¹ and Father J. Antonio Molinari came. With his appointment the parish became known as that of Thorndike, with Monson as a mission.¹⁶²

Indian Orchard was attended at irregular intervals from Chicopee. In 1864 Father Patrick Healy built St. Matthew's Church in this town.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ *Episcopal Register*, Jan. 22, 1866 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*); *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 730; *Catholic Directory*, 1867.

¹⁵⁶ *Episcopal Register*, March 20, 1860 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

¹⁵⁷ *Catholic Almanac*, 1861.

¹⁵⁸ *Pilot*, Sept. 3, 1864.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*; *Catholic Almanac*, 1865.

¹⁶⁰ *Memoranda*, Jan. 22, 1866.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, March 3, 1866.

¹⁶² *Catholic Directory*, 1867.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MISSIONS OF MAINE, NEW HAMPSHIRE, AND VERMONT

I

THE RUSH OF IMMIGRANTS from Ireland during this period affected not only Massachusetts but Maine. At Portland it became necessary to enlarge St. Dominic's Church in 1848.¹ In 1852, since it was evident that another church would soon be needed, a site for one on Munjoy's Hill was purchased.² In 1855 a gentleman by the name of Clapp made a gift of land for a Cathedral or school.³ In the venerable Whitefield mission a church was erected at Augusta to St. Mary. This edifice was in use by July 17, 1847.⁴ Some histories of Maine give the impression that Augusta was the centre of this district and Whitefield a mission. It may be true that the pastor resided at Augusta a good deal of the time, but the mission was known officially as that of Whitefield.⁵ Father Edward Putnam, who was the pastor of Whitefield, also rented a Protestant church in Bath in 1853 for the use of the Catholics.⁶

Benedicta remained in the charge of Father Moran until 1850, when he was transferred to Sandwich. Father Bapst then included it in his missions until 1852. It was then taken over by Father J. Connolly, of Woodstock, New Brunswick.⁷ Little official interest was displayed in the settlement project, except to attend to the transfer of deeds from time to time and the supervision of lumbering operations from which a small income was derived. By 1854 the college building was in danger

¹ *Memoranda*, Aug. 18, 1848; Jan. 4, 1849.

² *Pilot*, July 3, 1852; May 14, 1853. ³ *Memoranda*, Feb. 19, 1855.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Jan. 4, 1847; *Catholic Observer*, July 17, 1847.

⁵ See the *Catholic Almanacs* of the period.

⁶ *The Catholic Church in New England*, I, 513-514.

⁷ For Father Connolly see the *Catholic Directories*, 1852 *et seq.*

of tumbling down because of the collapse of its foundations and the sawmill was neglected and unused.⁸ At Fort Fairfield, a station of Benedicta, a Church of St. Denis was built in 1849.

In the northern part of Maine, in that section of Madawaska that was ceded to the United States by the Webster-Ashburton Treaty, there were two churches. St. Luce's was at Frenchville, and St. Bruno's at Van Buren. The *Catholic Almanacs* during the period that Maine was attached to Boston always note in relation to Madawaska: "In this section, allotted to the State of Maine by the late treaty with Great Britain, there are two Catholic churches, served by clergymen from Quebec. The inhabitants are mostly Canadian French." Father Dionne, of New Brunswick, was erecting a new church at Frenchville in 1847,⁹ and in 1851 he built a small church at Wallagras.¹⁰

II

At the time of Bishop Fenwick's death the Indian tribes at Old Town and Pleasant Point had been, it will be recalled, for some years without a resident priest, although they were by no means neglected, for the pastors of Eastport and Bangor had given them sufficient attention. But the Indians were not satisfied with this and constantly urged that a missionary should be sent to them. Bishop Fitzpatrick, almost immediately after he had taken charge of the Diocese, began to make inquiries of Father O'Sullivan, of Bangor, as to conditions amongst them. He found that the State of Maine and the Federal Government still paid a stipend for the services of the priest who attended the Indians, but it would seem that no schools were conducted for them.¹¹ When the Bishop made his first tour through Maine in the summer of 1847, he visited Pleasant Point, and undoubtedly the Indians urged him to send them a priest. It was not, however, until a year later that this could be done.

⁸ Father Bapst, S.J., to Bishop Fitzpatrick, Sept. 27, 1854 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁹ *Memoranda*, Aug. 14, 1847.

¹⁰ *The Catholic Church in New England*, I, 552. The *Catholic Almanacs* down to 1855 do not mention the church.

¹¹ Father O'Sullivan to Bishop Fitzpatrick, Dec. 8, 1846 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

On June 9, 1848, the Bishop met Father Brocard, the Jesuit Provincial, at Holy Cross College, and discussed with him plans to assign some of the Jesuits, who had been forced out of Switzerland and were coming to the United States, to missions amongst the Indians and Canadians of Maine.¹² By July 22, 1848, Father John Bapst, S.J., recently arrived from France, was on his way to Old Town, and on August 25, 1848, Father James Moore, S.J., left for the same destination.¹³

Of these two missionaries John Bapst occupies the most prominent place in Maine church history. He was born at La Roche, Switzerland, on December 17, 1815, and at the age of twenty-one entered the Jesuit's Swiss novitiate. Ordained on December 31, 1846, he was forced to leave his country within a year because of the disastrous outcome of the Sonderbund War, and went to Notre Dame d'Ay, France.¹⁴ There a strange premonition that he had was fulfilled when he received an order to go to the missions in the United States.¹⁵

On his arrival he was sent to the Penobscot Indians by Father Brocard, S.J. And so it came about that the Society of Jesus, coöperating with the plans of Bishop Fitzpatrick, was once more reëstablished in its ancient missions.

On August 7, 1848, Father Bapst stepped from a canoe onto the island at Old Town, a desolate figure who had no companions, nor knowledge of English, nor of the Penobscot tongue, nor of their customs; neither did he have, as he humbly admitted, any great desire for this type of work. To his everlasting credit it can be said that he went to his labors with true priestly obedience, learned the language, became a keen observer of Indian customs, and stifled, so that it was no hindrance, his natural longing for Europe and his former companions.

His was a trying experience. The Indians were plagued with

¹² *Memoranda*, June 9, 1848. ¹³ *Memoranda*, July 22, 1848; Aug. 25, 1848.

¹⁴ Father Bapst's career may be followed in the *Woodstock Letters*, XVII (1888), 218 ff., 361; XVIII (1889), 83 ff., 129 ff., 304 ff.; XX (1891), 61 ff., 214 ff., 406 ff. See also Father Bapst, S.J., to Father Joseph Duverney, S.J., June 10, 1850 (*Fordham Arch.*, 218 S 8; also in *Woodstock Letters*, XVII (1888), 222-229.

¹⁵ Father Bapst, S.J., to Father Duverney, S.J., *loc. cit.*

the curse of liquor and it took stern action even to begin to curb the evil. The quarrel between the Old and New Parties still disturbed the peace of the tribe.¹⁶ Cholera made its appearance in the cabins, and at one time Father Bapst, with only a thirteen-year-old girl for an assistant, was ministering to the spiritual and bodily wants of the sick.

But it was also an exhilarating experience, for he found in his Indians many admirable qualities. Describing one of the powwows that he attended he wrote:

Theirs is a savage eloquence, but I do not believe that in the eloquence of our greatest orators in the national assembly at Paris can there be found anything so natural, strong and just. I was astonished. Their language abounds with figures, and is graceful and delicate. It is nature that speaks, it is true, but nature freed from all trammels to which overwrought civilization often subjects our greatest orators; it is a robust nature that, unfolding itself like the oak of the forest, is full of life and majesty. Those who represent the Indians as a degenerate race are certainly wrong. Generally their judgment is sounder, their mind more masculine, their character more energetic and their passions stronger than the whites.¹⁷

Father Bapst had his first experience with the disagreements that had troubled the Old Town Indians for so many years some weeks after his arrival.¹⁸ Those Indians who were known as the Old Party were still seeking to control tribal affairs, and during the summer of 1848 they sent messengers to the Passamaquoddy, St. John, Caughnawaga, St. Francis, and other tribes asking their aid in crushing the New Party. But most refused. Instead a council was held at Caughnawaga, where it was decided to advise the Old Town Indians to make peace and to be "docile to the voice of their Pastor." Representatives were sent to the reservation to settle the quarrel.¹⁹

¹⁶ John Gilmary Shea, *History of the Catholic Missions Among the Indian Tribes of the United States* (New York, 1855), pp. 161-162.

¹⁷ Father Bapst, S.J., to Father DuVerney, S.J., *loc. cit.* ¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Rev. Eugene Vetromile, S.J., *The Abnakis and Their History, or Historical Notes on the Aborigines of Acadia* (New York, 1866), p. 105; hereafter cited as *The Abnakis*. Father Vetromile gives few dates. In establishing the chronology of these events I have relied on the internal evidence of various letters written by Father Bapst.

At a council which was held soon after their arrival, the chief, who represented all the tribes, heard the complaints of both parties and decided that the leaders of the New Party should govern the tribe.²⁰ This enraged the Old Party. They secured the assistance of some friends of theirs from a neighboring tribe²¹ and began a wild campaign to conquer their rivals. They won an easy victory. Then the Old Party, having secured the favor of a civil official, demanded that another tribal meeting should be held. But the New Party, knowing that the odds were definitely against them under such a plan, since the civil authorities never favored their side, refused to attend. Whereupon the civil official, disregarding the decision of all the tribes, declared that the New Party had lost all rights, and established the leaders of the Old Party in authority. The latter then proceeded to plan the destruction of their adversaries' mast. It will be recalled that this was a symbol of jurisdiction and the centre of all contentions. Another critical period followed, the mast finally fell, and the New Party was declared to be deposed. Fortunately the Indian agent put in an appearance at this time and drove the Old Party's allies off the island. This left them in a decided minority and the New Party once more assumed control.

During all these councils, disputes, and riots, Father Bapst was besieged by both sides, and urgent demands were made that he should announce which group he favored. But he was a wise man and refused to be caught. Every attempt was turned off with the declaration that his only concern was the souls of his people — he could take no part in purely secular affairs. He was, however, much worried by the situation and turned to the Bishop for advice. After a conference they decided that the best way to secure peace was by persuading the Indians to give up the ever-present reminder of their differences, the masts. They planned to substitute the Cross for these. The Bishop went to the Indian village on September 3, 1849, and at an assembly the next day he succeeded in convincing the Indians, with the

²⁰ Father Bapst, S.J., to Father Duverney, S.J., *loc. cit.*

²¹ Probably the New Party of the Passamaquoddies.

exception of four, that they should agree to the plan.²² A cross fifteen feet high was erected before the door of the church; then the Indians gathered around the mast and preparations were made to cut it down. But the four protestants were equal to the occasion and created an impasse that was not without its humorous aspects by twining their arms and legs around the pole. No one wanted to hack them to pieces in order to get at the mast and they won the day.²³

A cholera plague ravaged the Old Town Indians a short time after this,²⁴ and some of the Indians, blaming the mast for this affliction, cut it down. At the time no protest was made, but when the plague had ceased, then the four rebels began to complain. And with good effect, too, for they were able to win a large following. They decided that the mast should be reërected on July 4, 1850. This prospect of further trouble frightened certain members of the New Party, who wrote to the Governor warning him that there was every likelihood of a sanguinary riot on July 4th, since the rebels had secured the coöperation of many desperate characters in a neighboring tribe.²⁵ The Executive Council, taking action on this petition for protection against "a class of desperate and lawless Indians who have caused much quarrelling and trouble within the Indians of the Penobscot tribe," advised the Governor to instruct the Indian agent, Isaac Staples, to use every means to prevent

²² Father Bapst, *loc. cit.*; *The Abnakis*, p. 106; *Memoranda*, Aug. 31, 1849.

²³ I have three accounts of this, each of which varies greatly from the other. (1) Father Bapst says the Bishop stopped the meeting, and the Indians won (*loc. cit.*). (2) The Bishop makes no mention of the mast in the *Memoranda*. He describes the erection of the Cross, and remarks, "There is reason to hope that the reconciliation is sincere and will be permanent" (*Memoranda, loc. cit.*). (3) Father Vetromile writes that three Indians were involved in the mast affair, and that the Bishop excommunicated them (*Father Vetromile, op. cit.*, p. 107).

²⁴ Father Bapst, *loc. cit.*; Isaac Staples, Indian agent, to the Governor and Council of the State of Maine, June 20, 1850. This will be found in the Archives of the Department of State, State Capitol, Augusta, Maine. The Honorable Frederick Robie, Secretary of State, allowed me to search these and the *Registers* and *Journals* of the Executive Council.

²⁵ Aitteon Orson and others to the Governor and Council, June, 1850 (*Maine State Arch.*). I presume the "desperate characters" were members of the New Party of the Passamaquoddy tribe. The New Party in that tribe corresponded to the Old Party amongst the Penobscots.

a fracas and establish peace.²⁶ Governor Hubbard, however, chose to go far beyond this, and told the agent that since the Old Party were in the majority, they should govern the tribe.²⁷

Meanwhile, Father Bapst had received no salary from the Maine government for his services. On June 4, 1850, he wrote to the Governor asking for an allowance, and at the same time requested a grant of money so that he might establish a Catholic school.²⁸ The Maine authorities delayed settling their financial accounts with Father Bapst for many months, and then instructed Isaac Staples to arrange with the missionary for a salary of not more than two hundred dollars a year.²⁹

The arrival of a Catholic Indian missionary caused the Protestants to intrigue once more for control of the children's education.³⁰ The result was that when the Old Party learned that the missionary had asked for educational funds, they drew up a petition to the Governor and Council asking that money should be appropriated and that the school should be placed under the supervision of the Old Town School Committee.³¹ Although it can be presumed that the State of Maine was, as in the past, reluctant to subsidize any "Romanist" educational plan, yet it apparently was also a little chary about turning the matter over to the town, and so it settled the affair by authorizing the Indian agent to open a school that was to be conducted by him or his agents.³² This put the agent in a very difficult position. He had to put tribal authority into the hands of the Old Party. He knew that this would never stop the contentions

²⁶ *Register of the Executive Council of the State of Maine, 1850-1851*, June 22, 1850, p. 30 (*Maine State Arch.*).

²⁷ Governor Hubbard to Isaac Staples, Indian agent, June 22, 1850 (*Maine State Arch.*).

²⁸ Father Bapst, S.J., to Governor Hubbard, June 4, 1850 (*Maine State Arch.*).

²⁹ *Journal of the Executive Council of the State of Maine, 1851, 1852, 1853*, Nov. 8, 1851, p. 109 (*Maine State Arch.*). I am not certain whether Father Bapst was paid. Father Vetromile in his history says he was not (*op. cit.*, p. 102).

³⁰ Father Bapst, S.J., to Father Billet, April 27, 1850 (*Woodstock Letters*, XVII, 362-367).

³¹ John Aitteon and others to Governor Hubbard and Council, June 7, 1850 (*Maine State Arch.*).

³² *Standing Committee on Indian Affairs to the Governor and Council*, June 22, 1850 (*Maine State Arch.*).

in the tribe, and he must also have known that a school that was not run by the priest would not succeed. Whether it was he or someone else that finally worked out the solution of these problems is not clear, but a compromise was finally arranged. According to its terms, which were embodied in a treaty, the leaders of the Old Party were to remain in control of the tribe during their lifetime. When they died, their successors were to be chosen at an election.³³ The New Party accepted these conditions and their leader voluntarily resigned.³⁴ Father Bapst, who was on the point of giving up the mission, was persuaded to consent to this arrangement by the promise that he would have complete charge of the school.³⁵

He immediately traveled to Boston to secure a suitable teacher. But during his absence the Protestants of Old Town, acting under the leadership of a minister whose name, according to Father Bapst, was Merrill, were able to persuade the Old Party that the teacher should be a member of their faith. And so when the priest got back to his mission, he was met by a delegation led by two of his bitterest opponents, who declared that they would be satisfied with nothing but a Protestant schoolmaster.³⁶ Here was another muddle caused by bigoted meddlers! It put Father Bapst in a predicament. If he insisted on keeping the Catholic teacher, the peace would be broken and he would be blamed. If he yielded, he would be consenting to a scheme that was deliberately plotted for the purpose of injuring the Church he represented. The only course open to him was to delay giving an answer in the hope that some solution would appear.³⁷ But this was not effective. The Old Party "formed a species of schism from the Church,"³⁸ and despite

³³ *Treaty between Isaac Staples, Indian agent, and the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Captains of the Penobscot Tribe*, July 4, 1850 (*Maine State Arch.*).

³⁴ Father Bapst, S.J., to Father Brocard, S.J., Oct. 11, 1850 (*Woodstock Letters*, XVII, 368-369).

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Father Bapst, S.J., to a Jesuit in Europe, Nov. 10, 1851 (*Woodstock Letters*, XVII, 369-372).

³⁷ Father Bapst, S.J., to Father Brocard, S.J., *loc. cit.*

³⁸ Father Bapst, S.J., to a Jesuit in Europe, *loc. cit.*

the efforts of the priest all through the winter months of 1850 and much of 1851 to secure a peaceful settlement, he failed. Finally, late in August, the Bishop decided that he could no longer leave a priest in this maze of claims and intrigues, and sent Father Bapst to take charge of the Eastport missions.³⁹ The Jesuit left the island on September 2, 1851, after having advised the New Party to go to Canada to live with the Caughnawaga and St. Francis Indians.⁴⁰ With Father Bapst gone, the Protestants again tried to convert the Indians. But the latter refused to receive the proselytizers. Then an attempt was made to win them by the appeals of an Iroquois Indian convert. The Penobscots threatened to throw him into the river.⁴¹

The Protestants did, however, succeed in their efforts to control the school. It passed at last into the hands of the Old Town School Committee. This arrangement was not successful. The teachers who were assigned to the work were not familiar with the Indian language, and, since they were generally Protestant, could not secure the trust of their charges.⁴²

The tribe was not entirely abandoned by the Church. The Jesuits went to the island to visit the sick from time to time, and the Indians could go to Mass whenever they wished by crossing the river to Old Town. Some time after 1854, Father Vetromile, S.J., was called to the village to baptize a child and the Penobscots persuaded him to promise that he would thereafter visit them once a month and say Mass.⁴³

Father Bapst's association with the Indians did not cease with his departure from Old Town, for the Eastport mission included the Passamaquoddies at Pleasant Point. This tribe had also been divided by quarrels for some years. Early in 1852 Governor Hubbard apparently decided that something should be done about this and he ordered Seth W. Smith to try and

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *The Abnakis*, p. 108.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 109-110.

⁴² *The Abnakis*, pp. 109-110; Jacob Tuck to W. G. Crosby, June 24, 1853 (*Maine State Arch.*); *Journal of the Executive Council of the State of Maine, 1854*, Jan. 2, 1854, p. 145; *Register of the Executive Council of the State of Maine, 1853-1854*, July 7, 1853, p. 117 (*Maine State Arch.*).

⁴³ *The Abnakis*, pp. 110-111.

establish harmony. Smith secured the aid of Father Bapst, and on February 28, 1852, a treaty of peace was signed.⁴⁴

At the opening of this period Eastport and its missions were in the charge of Father John Boyce. He was removed on November 11, 1847, and was sent to Worcester to act as co-pastor,⁴⁵ and was succeeded by Father Charles Smith.⁴⁶ Father Smith remained in this mission until Father O'Brien, of the Chelsea-Lynn (Massachusetts) parish, left for Newburyport (Massachusetts) in May, 1848, and then Father Smith took his place in the former parish. The next incumbent of the Eastport mission was Father John O'Donnell, who held the post until the death of Father Maguire at Portland in March, 1850. Father O'Donnell was transferred to Portland,⁴⁷ and the Eastport mission was without a pastor until Father Bapst's arrival.

This assignment gave the Jesuits a tremendous amount of territory within which eight churches and thirty-three chapels were located.⁴⁸ The incessant labor that was necessary in order to care for these was, however, not a new experience. While Father Bapst was at Old Town, he had had charge of a number of stations in addition to the Indians, such as Cherryfield, Bucksport, Frankfort, and Thomaston. He ministered to the Canadians and Irish of these places together with Father Moore, S.J., who was sent to assist him in August, 1848.⁴⁹ A year later, Father Moore took charge of the towns just mentioned and some others, and Father Bapst limited his activities to Old Town.⁵⁰ This was during the period when Father Bapst was making such efforts to settle the Indian disputes. Apparently this arrangement did not last very long, and by June, 1850, the

⁴⁴ *The Abnakis*, pp. 118 *et seq.*; Seth W. Smith to Gov. Hubbard, March 1, 1852 (*Maine State Arch.*); Peter Avory, Indian Agent, to Gov. Hubbard, undated (*ibid.*); *Report, Standing Committee on Indian Affairs*, March 10, 1852 (*ibid.*); *Journal of the Executive Council of the State of Maine, 1851-1852*, March 10, 1852, pp. 181-182 (*ibid.*); *Passamaquoddy Treaty*, Feb. 28, 1852, *Journal*, *loc. cit.* (*ibid.*).

⁴⁵ *Memoranda*, Nov. 11, 1847.

⁴⁶ Father Smith was appointed on Nov. 8, 1847 (*Memoranda*).

⁴⁷ He was in Portland by April 11, 1850 (*Memoranda*).

⁴⁸ Father Bapst, S.J., to a Jesuit, Nov. 10, 1851 (*Woodstock Letters*, XVII, 369-372).

⁴⁹ *Memoranda*, Aug. 25, 1848.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, May 1, 1849.

two missionaries were again working together in the territory.⁵¹

At Eastport, Father Bapst had Father Force, S.J., and Father De Neckere, S.J., as companions, Father Moore having been recalled. By November three churches were being constructed. The one at Ellsworth was erected next to the old chapel; it was completed late in 1853. Ellsworth was, of course, the scene of the infamous attack on Father Bapst described elsewhere in this volume. Father Bapst lived here until June 7, 1854, and then was forced to withdraw because of an increasing anti-Catholicism. He did, however, continue to visit the town, and thus came to suffer his horrible tarring and feathering. After this several attempts were made to destroy the church, and the incendiaries were finally successful. If Bishop Fitzpatrick had been willing to allow the sale of the church to Protestants, he might have avoided this loss, for a Methodist minister offered to buy it some months before its destruction. The edifice was uninsured — no insurance company would accept the risk — and it was certain that sooner or later it would be maliciously ruined, yet the Bishop decided, "It may be devoured by fire, but must not be converted to a house of false worship, for it is dedicated to God, and the Holy Sacrifice has been offered in it."⁵² The second church, located at Old Town, was started in 1848. On September 6th of that year, Bishop Fitzpatrick was informed by Father Moore that the Canadians of Old Town wished to build a place of worship.⁵³ This church was being erected in 1852, and probably was opened in 1853.⁵⁴ The third church was built at Waterville. Here the Protestants urged the Canadians to erect a house of worship.⁵⁵ This church, later known as St. Francis of Sales, was opened in 1851.⁵⁶ The history of the mission at Calais is uncertain. The *Catholic Al-*

⁵¹ Father Bapst, S.J., to Father Duverney, S.J., June 10, 1850 (*Woodstock Letters*, XVII, 222-229).

⁵² *Memoranda*, Feb. 17, 1855. ⁵³ *Ibid.*, Sept. 6, 1848.

⁵⁴ Father Bapst, S.J., to Father Aschwanden, July 18, 1852 (*Woodstock Letters*, XVIII, 87-89). I presume it was opened in 1853, since the *Catholic Almanac*, 1854, first mentions it.

⁵⁵ Father Bapst, S.J., to Father Billet, April 27, 1850 (*Woodstock Letters*, XVII, 362-367).

⁵⁶ First mentioned in the *Catholic Almanac*, 1853.

manac for 1846 does not mention a church, although previous issues do. From 1847 to 1852 a new church is cited, but no notice is given in 1853. The volume for 1854 places a Church of the Immaculate Conception at Calais. The *Catholic Church in New England* states that a building known as the River View House was used by the Catholics of Calais. This may be the new church that is referred to in the *Catholic Almanacs* up to 1852. In 1852, according to the *History* just mentioned, during August, the Town Hall was purchased and converted into a place of worship. This probably is the Immaculate Conception Church of the *Catholic Almanacs* of 1854 and succeeding years. At Pembroke a store was bought and converted into a church about February, 1854.⁵⁷ The Jesuits also completed the church at West Machias.⁵⁸ The church started at Trescott in Bishop Fenwick's time seems to have been completed by Father Bapst in 1853.⁵⁹

Father Bapst lived at Eastport until January, 1853. He then took up residence at Ellsworth in accordance with a plan of his to have two mission centres, one at the former, and one at the latter, town.⁶⁰ In August, 1853, he was able to make further progress towards realizing his ambitions for the mission. He had long desired that either Portland or Bangor should be the centre of his activities. This became possible when Father O'Sullivan, of Bangor, was removed in August, 1853, and Bishop Fitzpatrick gave the parish to the Jesuits. Father O'Sullivan had started plans for a new church by purchasing a site. Father Bapst, however, found it to be unsuitable, and he secured another on York Street. The cornerstone of this church was laid by Bishop Fitzpatrick on December 8, 1854, in the presence of Bishop-elect Bacon. At what was the Rockland-Thomaston parish, ten acres of land on which stood a large house were bought, probably in 1854. It was planned to re-

⁵⁷ Father Bapst, S.J., to Bishop Fitzpatrick, Feb. 17, 1854 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁵⁸ *Memoranda*, Sept. 3, 1847; Father Bapst, S.J., to Bishop Fitzpatrick, *loc. cit.*

⁵⁹ It is mentioned for the first time during this period in the *Catholic Almanac*, 1854.

⁶⁰ Father Bapst, S.J., to Father Stonestreet, S.J., Sept. 12, 1852 (*Woodstock Letters*, XVIII, 90-91; 92-93).

model the house into a church.⁶¹ This property apparently was situated in Rockland. A lot was also bought for a church at Frankfort, probably in 1853.⁶² The final item in this mission concerns a church built for the Passamaquoddies at Schoodic Lake. This tribe was in the midst of one of its disputes some time in 1848, according to their historian, Father Vetromile, S.J., whose date probably should be set back to 1846 or 1847. The question at issue was finally settled by allowing two parties and two governors. But this did not bring peace, and it was finally decided that the New Party should ask the Maine authorities to build them a village on the north shore of Schoodic Lake. The request was granted, and a house for the priest and a church were also erected. The church was most probably built in 1848.⁶³

III

If the development of Catholicity in New Hampshire were to be measured by a yardstick made up of churches built and parishes created during the period, it would be found that the result was meagre. Only two churches were erected and only two parishes came into existence. Catholics did go into New Hampshire and were to be found in small groups in towns and villages, and sizable gatherings existed at Manchester and Portsmouth, but it was as nothing compared to the enormous masses that had poured into Massachusetts. Various reasons can be given to explain this. The State was, of course, definitely hostile to Catholics, but this would not be sufficient reason, for certainly they moved all through Massachusetts despite the adverse feeling there. More to the point would be the fact that the mill centres of Massachusetts were sufficiently numerous and opportunities for employment were so considerable as to discourage any desire to pass out of the State. Also, New Hampshire was not directly in the path of the great majority of immi-

⁶¹ *Catholic Almanac*, 1855.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 1853.

⁶³ *Register of the Executive Council of the State of Maine, 1847-1848*, Oct. 27, 1847, p. 85; *The Abnakis*, pp. 119-120.

grants who came into the country, and by the time they became aware of even its existence they had settled elsewhere. For these reasons the development here was not great. Yet there was much activity of a particular kind, namely, missionary work among the railroad laborers. The chance for employment on the various lines that were criss-crossing the State was a magnet that drew many. As a result Father Daly was still to be found following the camps from point to point and town to town, celebrating Mass chiefly in the shanties of the workmen.

The unhappy decline of the Claremont parish was unrelieved during the Fitzpatrick period by any noteworthy revival. Reduced to a mission status, the church was under the direction of Father Daly, who said Mass for the people at long intervals. Claremont was the centre of his many New Hampshire calling places, but it was one of little importance and other points in the State received far more attention.

The first noteworthy event in these missions took place in 1847, when it appeared that Manchester was to have a church. Around October, Father Daly prepared to build on land that was to be donated by the Amoskeag Company. Things even got to the stage where it was announced that the cornerstone would be laid on November 8.⁶⁴ But when the Bishop received the deed to the land on November 2, 1847, he found that it provided for trustees.⁶⁵ This was unacceptable to him and he refused to go ahead with construction work until the land had been recorded in the name of the Bishop of Boston. The project was not revived until Father William McDonald was sent to Manchester. Father McDonald was formerly a priest of the New Brunswick Diocese. He was allowed to enter the Boston Diocese on June 17, 1848,⁶⁶ and after a probationary period with Father O'Beirne, of Roxbury, was passed, he was sent to Manchester. He was a true priest in every respect, and to his zeal can be traced the foundations of the glorious faith of the people of that city. The offer made by the Amoskeag Company had not been withdrawn, but when Father McDonald began

⁶⁴ *Pilot*, Nov. 6, 1847; *Catholic Observer*, Nov. 6, 1847.

⁶⁵ *Memoranda*, Nov. 2, 1847.

⁶⁶ *Memoranda*, June 17, 1848.

negotiations for the actual transfer, it soon appeared that the Company was not motivated by ideals but by selfishness.

The gift land was in a remote and obscure corner on the outskirts of the city where no houses had been built. If it were accepted, two objectives would be secured: the Irish would be persuaded to move out to that section and thus the land would be sold, and it would also prevent their unwanted presence in the better residential districts.⁶⁷ Bishop Fitzpatrick, of course, would have nothing to do with such a scheme. This meant that another location would have to be sought. The Bishop went to Manchester with Father McDonald on November 7, 1848, and made a search for one. They finally found a Universalist meeting-house that was to be sold, and the pastor was told to negotiate for its purchase. Nothing came of this, however, and land was finally bought at a price of twelve hundred dollars. On this, the site of the present St. Anne's Church, Father McDonald commenced to build one of the largest edifices in the Diocese.⁶⁸ The dedication to St. Anne took place on April 4, 1850.⁶⁹ It was a most wretched piece of construction work, and within two years had to be torn down and a new church erected.⁷⁰

The only other new foundation in New Hampshire was at Portsmouth. To this place Father Charles McCallion came as pastor on November 21, 1851. He purchased a lot of land on Summit and Chatham Streets, and built there a small frame church that was not placed under the protection of any saint while Portsmouth was a part of the Boston Diocese.

IV

At the opening of the period there were two priests in Vermont: Father O'Callaghan served the missions of Burlington and Father Daly those of Middlebury. The Burlington territory included the counties of Franklin, Orleans, Essex, Chitten-

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, Nov. 7, 1848.

⁶⁸ *Catholic Observer*, June 21, 1849.

⁶⁹ *Pilot*, April 13, 1850.

⁷⁰ *Sacred Heart Review*, Oct. 2, 1897; *The Catholic Church in New England*, I, 602.

den, Lamoille, Caledonia, Washington, and Orange; Middlebury had within its lines Addison, Windsor, Rutland, Bennington, and Windham.

In Burlington the effect of the Irish Famine immigration was felt early in 1847, and by June a vast influx of these unfortunate refugees had occurred.⁷¹ Soon house after house was crowded with those who were stricken with ship fever. Their needs, spiritual and temporal, occupied Father O'Callaghan's attention for many long and weary hours. The natives, too, cared for them, and Father O'Callaghan testified to their charity when he wrote:

They have taken every precaution consistent with the shortness of the notice given them and consistent with the great numbers in need to make the necessary provision. The Poor-Master and the town Physicians are on the alert making the rounds to console and relieve.⁷²

This sudden increase in the number of his parishioners and the consequent strain upon his energy and ability to care for the scattered groups of his flock was fortunately offset by the partitioning of the Burlington missions and the establishment of a new parish at St. Albans. This was done on June 17, 1847, when Father George Hamilton was assigned to the mission of St. Albans.⁷³ Father O'Callaghan was left with Chittenden, Washington, and Orange Counties, while Father Hamilton took all those to the north. The division was suggested by William H. Hoyt, the convert Episcopal clergyman, and the Catholics of St. Albans and the surrounding towns.⁷⁴

Father Hamilton began his activities in a Universalist meeting-house.⁷⁵ Soon, however, William Hoyt donated a large lot of land on which there was a house that was remodeled into

⁷¹ Father O'Callaghan to Bishop Fitzpatrick, Jan. 23, 1847 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Memoranda*, June 17, 1847. Father Hamilton had been up to this date a priest of the St. Louis Diocese.

⁷⁴ James McNally and others to Bishop Fitzpatrick, Feb. 12, 1847 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*); Wm. H. Hoyt to Bishop Fitzpatrick, May 22, 1847 (*ibid.*); *Memoranda*, May 27, 1847.

⁷⁵ *Catholic Observer*, July 17, 1847.

a church.⁷⁶ It was not, however, large enough for the congregation, and in January, 1848, a new building was begun.⁷⁷ This church was first opened for use on November 1, 1850.⁷⁸ Several other churches were attached to the St. Albans mission. There was one at Fairfield, which was being erected by May, 1847, on land donated by a Protestant, Hubbard Barlow,⁷⁹ and another had been sufficiently completed at Swanton by February, 1847, for divine services,⁸⁰ while a third was ready for use at Highgate soon after 1849.⁸¹

Meanwhile, the French-speaking part of the congregation at Burlington had increased considerably, and in 1850 Father Mignault, who acted as Vicar-General for this section of the Diocese, sent Father Quévillon to take charge of them. He said Mass in the old courthouse for three hundred Canadians on April 8, 1850. Soon after, a church was started; the dedication ceremony, conducted by Father Mignault, took place on June 1, 1851.⁸² It was placed under the protection of St. Joseph. Father Quévillon began a church at Brandon in February, 1852.⁸³

The Montpelier mission was attended at long intervals by Father O'Callaghan and Father Mignault. Father Lévêque also visited here in January, 1847. On January 19, 1850, Father Hector Drolet arrived in Boston after many years of missionary activity in New Brunswick.⁸⁴ He was on his way to Canada. He visited the Bishop, the need for missionaries to the Canadians evidently was discussed, and Father Drolet offered his services. The Bishop accepted him on January 21st, and told the priest to go to Vermont, where he was to visit Montpelier, Vergennes, and several other places, and discover where prospects were best for establishing a church.⁸⁵ Father Drolet made

⁷⁶ *Pilot*, Aug. 20, 1864. ⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, Aug. 20, 1864. ⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, Nov. 23, 1850.

⁷⁹ Wm. H. Hoyt, *loc. cit.*; *Catholic Observer*, Oct. 18, 1848; *Catholic Church in New England*, II, 515.

⁸⁰ Wm. H. Hoyt, *loc. cit.*; James McNally and others, *loc. cit.*

⁸¹ Abby Maria Hemenway, *The Vermont Historical Gazetteer; A Magazine Embracing a History of Each Town, Civil, Ecclesiastical, Biographical, Military* (Burlington, 1871), II, 384.

⁸² *Memoranda*, June 5, 1851.

⁸³ *Catholic Church in New England*, II, 498-499.

⁸⁴ *Memoranda*, Jan. 19, 1850. ⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, Jan. 21, 1850.

the journey and was back in Boston on February 13th with the news that the people were pleased with the idea of having a priest residing amongst them, and were willing to contribute the funds necessary to build a church.⁸⁶ Montpelier was decided upon as the centre of the mission, and the Bishop instructed him to take up residence there.⁸⁷ The new pastor bought the old courthouse and converted it into a church. This new addition to the rapidly growing number of churches in the Diocese was in use by November, 1850. General Clarke in a letter to his wife dated November 3, 1850, describes how he stole away from the Senate Chamber to attend All Saints' Mass in

. . . the new church the Catholics are finishing off — within a dozen rods of the State House. . . . The poor Catholics looked upon me with surprise as I knelt among them, and declined the offer of a "better place." I rather like, you know, to kneel right among the most humble, and God knows I *belong* there.⁸⁸

That other extraordinary missionary of Vermont, Father Daly, continued his long and toilsome journeys during the period, literally tracking down Catholics in every nook and corner of his territory. Besides the stations already mentioned as being attended by him in Part III, he added those of Ludlow, Brattleboro, Arlington, Northfield, and Rockingham.

At Brattleboro, Father Joseph C. Shaw, of Boston, said the first Mass some time in the later part of August or the first weeks of September, 1848. Father Daly attended the people of this town from time to time. The Vicar-General, Father Mignault, was asked by the people of Brandon in 1851 to send a priest to visit them. Father Quévillon of St. Joseph's, Burlington, came and said Mass in the Town Hall. The Canadians soon opened a subscription list and began to plan for a church. Actual building operations, however, soon exhausted the funds, and they found it necessary to seek the aid of the English-speaking Catholics. This combination solved the difficulty,

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, Feb. 13, 1850.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, Feb. 15, 1850.

⁸⁸ *The Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, II, 423.

the church was completed, and in October, 1852, Father Mignault dedicated it to Our Lady of Good Help.

From this survey it can be seen that there was a vigorous development of Catholicity in Vermont, and especially in the northern section, where many new communities of Catholics appeared and older congregations grew in size. With the tremendous growth of Massachusetts in mind, there is danger of getting a false perspective; but if it is viewed by itself, then the true significance can be grasped. Perhaps this can be done best by remembering that when the time came to divide the Diocese, it was decided that Vermont was sufficiently strong to stand by itself.

Of outstanding interest was the establishment on a sound basis of national parishes for the Canadians. For years they had agitated for this, but little could be done. Then came the first tentative step in the missionary journey of Father Lévêque when the possibilities were explored. This was followed by the almost simultaneous appointments of Father Quévillon to Burlington and Father Drolet to Montpelier. Nor were their efforts confined to these places, for they found many other French-speaking communities that welcomed their attentions. It was a distinct achievement of the Bishop to have placed the missions to the Canadians on a firm basis.

CHAPTER IX

EDUCATIONAL CONFLICTS

I

THE EFFECTS of the rapid increase of the Catholic population upon the native American stock were many and varied. One of the most striking results is to be found in the controversy that ensued over the attempt to give some religious education in the public schools of Massachusetts. Under Horace Mann the Massachusetts educational system was the centre of a long and bitter dispute over what kind of, and how much, religious training should be imparted. The final result was a very thin and weak sort of instruction, which attempted to inculcate some moral principles without offending the sensibilities of the various Protestant denominations. It was a compromise between complete elimination of all religious atmosphere and the establishment of sectarian schools supported by public funds for each of the various denominations. Yet there was not complete harmony of opinion. As late as 1849 the State Board of Education reported that a few interested people still strenuously opposed the system that had been evolved, and were urging a return to publicly supported sectarian schools.¹ This dissatisfaction, however, disappeared as the Catholic Church expanded and the various sects banded together to repel what they believed to be deliberate attacks upon the school system by the Romanists.

At least three sources from which this fear arose can be named: one was the widespread anti-Catholicism of the day; another, the apprehension that the Catholics would seek public funds for their parochial schools; while the third centred in the use of the Bible in the schools. The last cause needs some

¹ *Twelfth Annual Report of the Board of Education, Together with the Twelfth Annual Report of the Secretary of the Board* (Boston, 1849), p. 104.

explanation. Both the Catholic and Protestant Churches have their version of the Bible, and both defend very vigorously and uncompromisingly their authenticity. Hence, to ask either to accept and use the other's version is certain to create grave disputes. Moreover, as far as Catholics are concerned, there is a strict prohibition against reading the Protestant version of the Scriptures without the permission of the Church authorities. And so when a Catholic child entered a public school as a pupil and was handed a King James' Version of the Bible and was told to read from it, trouble was likely to follow. The obvious solution of this difficulty would have been either to excuse Catholic children entirely from reading the Bible or to allow them to use their Douay version. This was prevented by a very strong prejudice, which would not permit any such toleration to Catholics. The result was a steadily increasing hostility.

II

The first sign of the conflict was seen in 1849. In that year the question of incorporating Holy Cross College arose. Bishop Fenwick had deeded the property of this institution to Georgetown College a few days before he died. This meant that all the business of Holy Cross College was transacted under Georgetown's charter. The result was a very awkward situation which caused endless embarrassment and confusion. When, therefore, the College was ready to graduate its first class in 1849, the Bishop and the Jesuits decided to seek a Massachusetts charter. A petition for this charter was drawn up and given to the Bishop, who confided it to Representative Healy, of Boston.² He presented it to the Massachusetts General Court, and in due order it came up before the Joint Standing Committee on Education. The petitioners were asked to appear, and the Bishop, Father Early, S.J., and Father Blenkinsop, S.J., responded. The matter was gone over very thoroughly. A full explanation of the College regulations and courses of study was given, and it appeared that one rule caused the Committee

² *Memoranda*, Feb. 26, 1849.

some concern. This was the requirement that a student should be a Catholic. Bishop Fenwick had established this policy because of his hard experience in the Charlestown Convent affair with those who resented the admission of Protestant pupils into a Catholic school. When the charter was asked for, there seems to have been no real reason other than this for insisting that the principle should be retained. Since there was little likelihood that many Protestant boys would seek out Holy Cross College when numerous other colleges were available, it seems probable that the rule was kept merely out of respect for the Bishop's memory. Although this rule eventually came to play a large part in the proceedings, at that time it does not seem to have impressed the Catholic representatives as being too objectionable to the Committee. Bishop Fitzpatrick and his companions came away from the meeting with the impression that the petition would be recommended for favorable action.³ But on March 30th a report was presented to the House advising denial of the charter. No reasons for this decision were given.⁴

This action was immediately protested. The *Boston Daily Advertiser*, ever a champion of the Church during these years under the leadership of the Hales, led the opposition. An editorial denounced the report. It was stated that Holy Cross College had been in existence for seven years and had a larger corps of instructors than Williams or Amherst College. The writer then went on to charge that, although no reasons for rejecting the request for a charter were given, the basis for the decision was the fact that Holy Cross would admit only Catholic students. But, said he, this is an injustice to deny a charter to a Catholic college when the three other colleges in the State are Protestant. Catholics cannot in conscience partake of the instruction in these colleges, since it is permeated with Protestantism, and, therefore, they should be allowed to have a college of their own.⁵

This and other protests were sufficiently persuasive and the

³ *Ibid.*, March 13, 1849.

⁴ *Ibid.*, March 31, 1849.

⁵ *Boston Daily Advertiser*, April 3, 1849.

House did not deem it wise to refuse permission to reconsider the decision. A resolution to this effect was placed before that body and the Educational Committee was ordered to take up the matter once more. The second report came back to the House on April 13, 1849. Four members had voted against it and three in its favor. A spirited and somewhat acrimonious debate ensued. A sign that public opinion was being aroused by the matter is to be found in a remonstrance against the charter that arrived before the House from Gloucester, a "stronghold of Nativism."⁶

The majority report was in part based upon the principle that a college was a public institution, open to all who sought admission. This, it emphasized, was the traditional attitude. No college in Massachusetts had ever been allowed to assume a purely private character and limit its enrollment to a restricted group. The Catholic authorities, however, would not accept such a position. They would not agree to a charter which would provide for the admission of any student regardless of his creed. This being true, there was nothing to do but refuse the charter. "Colleges," the majority declared, "are public bodies and it is the policy of the State to exclude from them all religious tests, if they are to enjoy the privileges that the Legislature is accustomed to grant." Moreover, it was stated that the Legislature did not have the right to grant a charter "without the purpose of a public benefit to result plainly and promptly therefrom." The petitioners did not ask for a charter to serve the public. The charter they requested was for the benefit of themselves, and while it was true that the education of the child was a public benefit, that education could be obtained in colleges already established.⁷ The majority also found that the Holy Cross petitioners were not willing to allow the State the right to appoint some of the trustees and a board of visitors.⁸

Concluding their report, the objectors, declaring a desire to

⁶ *Memoranda*, April 4, 1849.

⁷ *Report of the Joint Standing Committee on Education; Catholic Observer*, April 26, 1849.

⁸ *Ibid.*

be fair, suggested that a charter similar to Amherst's be given. The Amherst charter had a clause protecting instructors and students from suffering penalties because of religious beliefs. The majority acknowledged, however, that such a proposal had been made to the petitioners and they had stated that they would be compelled to refuse it.

The minority report began by acknowledging that it had always been the policy of the Commonwealth to grant charters to colleges only if they were public and not sectarian. This policy was well demonstrated by the case of Amherst. Here the petitioners were chiefly Congregationalists, a denomination that was numerous, influential, and for a long time the established religion of the State. Yet the General Court demanded for their charter a provision granting freedom of religious opinion. The minority fully agreed with this action. But, on the other hand, they understood the position of the petitioners. They were confronted by a great and distinguishing principle of Protestantism, absolute freedom of religious opinion. The Catholics rejected such a principle. They were exclusive in their religious beliefs. They did not, as far as religion was concerned, wish to mingle with other denominations. Now, said the minority, this means that Holy Cross College could never be placed on an equal footing with the other colleges of the State. But they wished to be tolerant, and, therefore, they raised this question. Could not a "seminary of learning" be incorporated under the title of a college as a private institution? The Massachusetts House of Representatives had never given explicit consideration to such a proposition, but implicitly it had been discussed and approved. Charters had been granted to institutions which were definitely sectarian. The Newton Theological Institution, Phillips Academy, and Wesleyan Academy all were sectarian institutions and were the possessors of charters. Why not give Holy Cross College the same privilege? There were one hundred and twenty thousand Catholics in Massachusetts. Their religious convictions made it impossible for them to receive a charter providing religious liberty. Yet they wanted to educate their children. And they

wished a more facile method of carrying on the business of their College. Protestants must recognize the plain fact that the Catholics were in their midst, and were going to stay there. Sound policy demanded that friendly relations should be established with them. This would gradually break down their exclusiveness and they would learn to mingle freely with the community.

Although neither the majority nor the minority report made explicit mention of it, one of the reasons for refusing a charter was the fear that the Catholics might seek an appropriation from the public funds for the College. It was the practice in Massachusetts from time to time to give money to the various colleges. This was one of the bases on which was founded the theory that institutions of higher learning were to be considered public, and not private. Now there was an apprehension that as the Catholic population grew, and became more powerful politically, an attempt would be made to secure appropriations for Catholic schools. This objection must have played a large, if almost unmentioned, part. When the minority proposed its substitute bill, it was very careful to provide that the college

. . . shall be regarded as a private corporation, for the benefit of one denomination only, and, therefore, having no claims whatever upon the Commonwealth, beyond what is herein granted.⁹

In view of the traditional policy of the State towards colleges, there can be no doubt that the majority was correct in its contentions. The Legislature, representing the opinion of the people of Massachusetts, had insisted on liberty of religious belief for college students and their instructors. When the Bishop and Jesuits asked for a charter and at the same time insisted on exclusiveness, they must have realized what a huge obstacle stood in their way. On the other hand, one cannot doubt that they asked for this charter, and, implicitly, for a

⁹ *Report of the Joint Standing Committee on Education; Catholic Observer*, April 26, 1849.

change in legislative practice on the basis that they never would seek State funds to support their school. This provision having been made, they undoubtedly felt warranted in seeking the grant. And as the historian looks back into those days, he can see no reason why under these circumstances it should not have been given except unwillingness to deviate from an established custom — an unwillingness that was motivated by prejudice.

Although the majority protested their freedom from bias, assertions can be found in their report which contradict their protestations. For example, in discussing the routine followed at Holy Cross, the report stated that the students were required to go to confession, or, as they put it, "to attend the confessional, and receive absolution from the priest, according to the customs of the sect." Then they went on to say, "This confession, we are told, extends to all thoughts and feelings, as well as acts." Anyone familiar with the popular accusations of those days against the Church can easily understand the attitude of the men who wrote this statement. Just what connection did the Sacrament of Penance have with a college charter? Its introduction here can mean only one thing. These four members of the majority were attempting to set the minds of their fellow legislators against the petition by reminding them of a hotly assailed and much misrepresented practice of the Catholics.

Moreover, these men were guilty of deliberate misrepresentation. They said:

It is due to the petitioners to state, that, in all their interviews with the committee, they were perfectly open, frank, and honorable, and consistent with themselves. They stated that, in religious matters, they were entirely exclusive, and must be so, and were frank enough further to admit, that had they the civil power, they could not exercise it otherwise than exclusively, as to all religious rights.

Such a statement, hidden behind a façade of apparent fairness, was only calculated to antagonize men who rightly and tena-

ciously clung to religious liberty. Nor was it true. Neither the Bishop nor the Jesuits made any such declaration. The Bishop protested to the Committee, and they promised to correct it.¹⁰ There is no evidence that they ever did.

The debate over the bill in the House definitely revealed that, despite disclaimers, the opposition was to a large extent based on prejudice. Charles W. Upham, leader of the Committee minority and chief champion of the Church and College, said:

After all, Mr. Speaker, the opposition to the measure arises almost wholly, I apprehend, from the strong and deep prejudice long entertained against the Catholics, on account of their doctrines, ritual, and organization, and the historical associations connected with their Church in past ages, and the old world.¹¹

And if Upham's testimony is suspect because of the direction in which his interests lay, then there is that of Erastus Hopkins, ex-Calvinist minister, and chairman of the Committee on Education. Mr. Hopkins was an avowed foe of the Church. He made several speeches before the House, during which he dragged out all the old calumnies against the history and practices of the Church, and also added a few of his own invention. It was most objectionable to him to entrust children who were only eight years old to the care of celibates! Nor could he view with equanimity a college rule which allowed the use of only the Douay Bible. One wonders at his inconsistency in supporting in 1855 a State law which commanded that only the common English version of the Scriptures should be used in the public schools! Mr. Hopkins could disclaim any prejudice, but could accuse the Catholics of essaying "to control the religious faith and conduct of the most ignorant masses." The religion of the Church of Rome, he thundered, made abject slaves of men, subjecting them to a hierarchy which professed to hold the keys to heaven and hell.¹² As the debate went on, it be-

¹⁰ *Memoranda*, April 20, 1849.

¹¹ *Boston Daily Courier*, April 25, 1849.

¹² Erastus Hopkins, *Speeches of Mr. Hopkins, April 24th and 25th, 1849* (Northampton, 1849).

came more and more hostile to the Church until Representative Condry, of Northampton, felt obliged to protest to the House against the course that the opposition had taken.¹³

Under these circumstances it was to be expected that the petition would be rejected. When the vote was taken, 84 were in favor of it and 117 registered opposition.¹⁴

III

The use of the Protestant Bible in the public schools came to be more and more a source of controversy as the Catholic population increased. Catholic parents objected to their children being compelled to read from it and were instructing them to refuse. As a consequence children were being punished and expelled from school. By 1851 parents were threatening to bring the matter before the courts, seeking redress.¹⁵ Yet the exercise continued to be insisted upon and more frequent complaints were heard. Finally in 1853 *The Pilot* was advising parents that school teachers had no right to enforce sectarian practices such as reading the Protestant Bible and reciting Protestant prayers. If other means failed to stop this, then try a lawsuit, that paper directed. *The Pilot*, too, was now taking a bold stand. It was very unwise, the editor said, for school committees to allow this annoyance of Catholic children. So far the Catholics had not started any agitation in this State in regard to the schools. But if "the bigots" were not careful, they would force the Catholics to open a vigorous and systematic campaign for their rights. "We have a constitutional right," one article concluded, "to demand that all sectarian matter shall be banished from the schools, and that the faith of Catholic children shall not be either openly or covertly assailed."¹⁶

Despite these warnings, however, there was no lessening of the pressure and the bitterness on both sides was merely deepened. An unfortunate result was that many Catholic parents

¹³ *Boston Daily Courier*, April 26, 1849.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Pilot*, Dec. 13, 1851.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Nov. 5, 26, 1852. The quotation is from the Nov. 26 issue.

were keeping their children away from school.¹⁷ In 1859 the whole affair reached a resounding climax in what is known as the Eliot School Case.

Meanwhile, however, other events intervened which throw light upon another phase of the educational controversy. In 1850 certain elements in the Democratic Party and the entire Free Soil Party united in Massachusetts for political action, and in 1853 this Coalition succeeded in having a convention called to revise the State Constitution. Among other proposals made in the convention was one to prohibit the appropriation of public money to sectarian schools. The cause of this proposal was to be found in the fact that in some other States application had been made for appropriations of public funds for Catholic schools. Citizens of Massachusetts feared that the Catholics would make such a request, and dreaded that their ever-increasing voting power would some day make it possible for them to obtain school funds from the State. Hence the proposed amendment.

Despite attempts to sidetrack the resolve, charges that it was rushed through without sufficient debate and warnings that if it passed Catholics would try to prove that the public schools were actually sectarian because of the use of the Protestant Bible, the amendment received sufficient support. It was referred to the people for approval along with all the other parts of the proposed Constitution.

The Pilot waged a vigorous campaign against the entire Constitution. The main reason for its opposition lay in the proposal to redistrict the State. This would have thrown the balance of political power into the rural districts where the Irish vote was not so important, and away from the cities and towns where that vote was becoming a large factor. *The Pilot* also opposed the Constitution because it was the work to a large extent of the Free-Soilers, whose principles were not approved by that paper.¹⁸ The sectarian school resolve was disapproved, but less

¹⁷ *Debates and Proceedings in State Convention, 1853* (Boston, 1853), pp. 616-617; speech of Mr. Wood, of Fitchburg.

¹⁸ *Pilot*, March 5, June 25, Oct. 1, 8, Nov. 5, 12, 1853.

space and effort were given to attacking this section of the proposed Constitution. Here the position taken was that the Massachusetts educational system was still in the experimental stage, and it would be unwise to give it a set form by incorporating this policy into the Constitution.¹⁹

Those who favored the resolve strove just as enthusiastically to secure its passage. A special effort was made to persuade ministers to take a part. Circulars were sent to them urging their coöperation, and many of them entered the political arena to make speeches favoring its passage.²⁰

The resolve was defeated by a very narrow margin of only 401 votes. The scant margin of victory can be calculated when it is known that all other provisions of the Constitution were turned down by much stronger majorities. There can be no doubt that many in the State really feared that the Catholic Church would make a drive for school funds.

The narrow margin of defeat for the anti-sectarian school law made it possible for its advocates to hope that if it were separated from the other controverted clauses of the proposed Constitution, it might receive the people's approval. In 1854 Governor Washburn urged that certain of the proposals in the defeated Constitution should again be placed before the people. He did not mention the school law, but certain champions of it in the House of Representatives were able to have it referred to the committee that was appointed to consider the Governor's recommendations. The committee was forced to report the law back to the House, where it was easily passed. The Senate also acted favorably, and in 1855 the Know-Nothing Governor, Henry J. Gardner, urged a second passage. This was easily accomplished, and it then became possible to bring it before the people. Popular ratification was secured, and it became the law of the State on May 23, 1855.²¹

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, July 23, Oct. 15, 22, 1853.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, Dec. 31, 1853.

²¹ Sherman M. Smith, *The Relation of the State to Religious Education in Massachusetts* (Syracuse, 1926), p. 209. In this part of the discussion of the sectarian school law I made free use of Dr. Smith's work.

IV

Meanwhile, the debate over the use of the Bible in the schools became more acrimonious. The indignation of Catholic parents over the acts of city and town authorities who compelled their children to use the forbidden version was continually augmented by new reports of the uncompromising position that was taken in the schools. Fathers and mothers became more reluctant to send their children into an atmosphere that was dangerous to the faith of the little ones. This failure to attend schools caused much concern to the native population, who feared that the children would grow up in ignorance and become a detriment to the State. Therefore, in 1852, a law was passed compelling attendance at school for twelve weeks in the year. This statute was liberal enough, because it could be complied with by going to a parochial school. Yet it was not effective. In 1854 the Secretary of the Board of Education, Barnas Sears, reported that despite it there were far more children in Massachusetts who were of school age than actually attended school. He traced this situation to the opposition that existed amongst Catholics to the use of the Protestant Bible in the schools.²²

Despite this reluctance of parents to send their children to the public schools, no willingness to ease the situation was displayed. In fact there was a perverse spirit in many that urged them to widen the chasm that had been built between the devout Irish and the public schools. In 1855, while the Know-Nothings reigned, a petition was presented to the General Court by George L. Cook and sixty-five other signers, asking for the passage of a law to secure the reading of the Scriptures in every public school and also for an amendment to the Constitution of the State making the use of the Bible compulsory. The Committee on Education acted favorably on the petition in so far as it called for a law. A statute was recommended by this body which would provide that some portion of the King James

²² *Eighteenth Annual Report of the Board of Education, 1854*, p. 66.

version of the Scriptures should be read each day in the public schools. After some debate a law was passed which omitted mention of the King James version, but required the daily reading of the common English text.

This 1855 Legislature, as is well known, won undying notoriety for itself because of its anti-Catholicism. Many of its infamous acts, such as investigations of Catholic educational institutes, are discussed elsewhere. Here it may be mentioned that it not only passed the Bible law, but also attempted by indirect methods to destroy parochial schools. Thus, the House approved a bill which would have required that all teachers in private schools should be required to obtain the approval of the School Committee or Superintendent in the city or town where they were to teach. One can imagine the reception that would have been given to a Catholic nun who appeared for examination. Fortunately the Senate rejected the bill. Another scheme to destroy the parochial schools was revealed in an apparently innocuous bill ostensibly aimed at controlling the labor of children in mills. This bill professed a humanitarian purpose in that it demanded that a child should not be employed in a mill unless he had gone to school for a specified time. But the catch in the bill was the provision that the school had to be one authorized by a School Committee, and the teachers had to be approved by the Committee. It was not a very subtle plan, but apparently no one paid much attention to the bill in the Senate until an amendment to it was proposed which would have provided that children between the ages of ten and fifteen could not be employed for more than ten hours a day. This was objected to by the bill's sponsors, who were unwilling to have it involved in a controversy about the number of hours a person should be required to work. They were forced to declare:

The bill has a further object, a peculiarly American object. It is true we did not wish to bring that object out fully to view. We wished to bring that object out as quietly as we could, for it is a subject that has occasioned the committee more difficulty than any that has come before them this year,

and this object was, if we must say it, to break up the Catholic schools.²³

The bill was finally rejected. This may sound a bit strange. The 1855 Legislature was not one that would ordinarily refuse anything that might injure the Church. But at that particular time the Legislature was smarting under the disclosures of the activities of the notorious committee it had appointed to investigate convents, and the Senate probably hesitated to tilt its lance again at the Church.

In 1859 the rule enforcing the use of the Protestant Bible in the schools was the cause of a famous court trial in Boston that focused the attention of all Massachusetts on the question. In March of that year McLaurin F. Cook, sub-master in the Eliot School, was brought into the police court on the charge of having maliciously assaulted Thomas J. Wall, a pupil in the school, who refused to recite the Protestant version of the Commandments.

Some examination of the Boston school regulations in regard to the use of the Scriptures in the schools and how these rules were carried out is necessary. Up to 1851 the regulations recommended that the morning exercises should begin with the reading of the Bible and the recitation of prayers. In other words, a short period of religious devotion was urged, although this was not mentioned. In 1851 the reading of the Bible was made compulsory, and it was recommended that this should be followed by prayer by the master. In 1853 a change was made. Reading of the Bible was limited to the teacher, and the Board urged that this should be followed by prayer. Here, perhaps, the theory may be ventured that the teacher was specified as the one who was to read the Bible in order to silence Catholic protests against forcing children to read it. Let it be emphasized that this is merely a theory. In 1857 the Board expanded this rule. A definite prayer was recommended — the Lord's Prayer, which was to be said either by the teacher or by the teacher and children. The Board also counseled that the teacher should see to it that the pupils learned and repeated the

²³ *Pilot*, May 19, 1855.

Ten Commandments at least once a week. The 1858 regulations added a provision that the afternoon session should close "with appropriate singing."²⁴ From this it will be seen that in 1859 the Boston School Committee had a rule which made it imperative for the teacher to read the Bible, and that it was urged that this reading should be followed by the Lord's Prayer. This was to be said by the teacher or the pupils and teacher. A wish also was expressed that the children should learn and repeat the Ten Commandments once a week. School was to be closed by singing a hymn.

Now, of course, these orders and recommendations set up what was for all practical purposes a series of devotional exercises. In fact the 1857 regulation specifically stated that reading of the Scriptures was a devotional exercise. This was a perfectly acceptable state of affairs for Protestants, who, despite doctrinal disagreements, mingle freely in religious worship. But it was not agreeable to Catholics, who are not allowed to partake in religious exercises not approved by the Church. The singing of a hymn (generally it was "Old Hundred"), the reading of the Scriptures, the reciting of the Lord's Prayer in the Protestant version, and the memorizing of the Ten Commandments in the Protestant form were all opposed to Catholic principles. Catholics were, and of necessity had to be, conscientious objectors to these orders and counsels.

There seem, however, to have been some liberties taken in at least some Boston schools in the carrying-out of these orders. Evidently there was a consciousness of the conflict with the religious principles of the Catholics and an effort was made to adjust matters so that Catholic religious principles would not be violated. In the Eliot School there probably was for a time some kind of a policy of ignoring what could have been considered to be violations of the regulations by the pupils. This school had eight hundred pupils, of whom three fourths were Catholics.²⁵ Samuel Mason, the principal, declared that he

²⁴ I have taken all these rules, with the exception of the 1857 regulation, from a list given in the *Boston Daily Traveller*, March 15, 1859. The 1857 regulation will be found in *Rules of the Board of School Committee, 1857, City Doc. 18*, chap. VIII, sect. 5, p. 27.

²⁵ *Boston Daily Traveller*, March 15, 1859.

never made any objection if, when the boys were reciting the Our Father or the Commandments individually, they substituted the Catholic version for the Protestant.²⁶ But when they said these collectively, then he required that the Protestant version should be used. Yet, even in this case, he did not care if the Catholic boys remained silent — in fact, he claimed that in some instances the boys actually said their own version.²⁷ Moreover, Mason had instructed his teachers not to punish boys who did this.²⁸ Apparently the master followed a liberal policy, yet with strange inconsistency he asserted that, although he never objected to verbal changes in the Our Father, as for example “hallowed” for “sanctified,” yet he also claimed that he would not allow the Roman Catholic form to be used in his school. Since substituting words of the Catholic version in the Protestant text practically meant using the Catholic form, it is hard to understand exactly what his policy was.

In carrying out these orders and recommendations of the Boston School Committee, it was the custom in the Eliot School to open each week by reading a passage from the Bible, then the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments were recited. One Monday morning, March 7th, Miss Shepard, one of the Eliot staff, began what was the second term of the school year by requiring her boys to recite the Commandments individually. Her purpose was to make sure that they knew them. Thomas Wall was called, and he refused to say them. The boy had never done this before because he had always been allowed to make whatever changes were necessary in order to conform to the Catholic text. But this time the teacher would not permit the boy to do this. He was told to say the Commandments as they were in the spelling book; that is, in the Protestant version. He declined to do that because his father had forbidden him to use this form.²⁹ The teacher kept pressing him until finally he said that he did not know the Protestant version.

²⁶ *Boston Journal*, March 16, 1859; *Boston Pilot*, March 21, 1859.

²⁷ *Boston Daily Traveller*, *loc. cit.*

²⁸ *Boston Journal*, March 19, 1859; *Boston Daily Traveller*, March 19, 1859.

²⁹ *Boston Journal*, March 18, 1859; *Boston Daily Advertiser*, March 19, 1859.

Unfortunately, in explaining this Wall case there are some phases upon which investigation does not throw a clear light. This is one of them. The difficulty here is to solve why Miss Shepard insisted on the Protestant version, and would not consent, as heretofore, to the previous custom of allowing the boys to make substitutions in favor of the Catholic text. The only thing that can be done is to hypothesize. Now it is possible that Micah Dyer, chairman of the School Committee of the Eliot School, an old Know-Nothing and an enemy of the Church, was responsible. He may have protested against Mason's liberal policy and demanded strict adherence to Protestant ways. This hypothesis can be enlarged. Dyer may have had a crazy scheme in mind. He knew that in many cases parents kept their children away from school because they were forced to be present at Protestant services. He also knew that there was a State law which punished any child who did not go to school by consigning it to the reform school at Westboro. Here he would come entirely under Protestant influences and probably be lost to the Church. Perhaps Dyer reasoned that strict enforcement of the regulations would cause many of the children to be taken from school. Then, since there was no other school for them, the law would be violated and they would be sent away. This hypothesis has some support. Questions were asked about the existence of such a plan when the affair finally reached the courts,³⁰ and Bishop Fitzpatrick felt that this was the true situation.³¹

Young Wall was kept after school and was turned over to the principal, who apparently was at first inclined to allow him to say his own Commandments, for he asked the boy if he had a book in which they were printed. Thomas promised to bring his catechism. But then Mason changed his mind, for he discharged Wall until he brought his father or mother to school.³² The suspicion that Dyer was behind all this is made much more certain because of Mason's next move. He consulted with Dyer and asked him what he should do. The chairman told

³⁰ *Boston Daily Traveller*, March 21, 1859.

³¹ *Memoranda*, March 15, 1859.

³² *Boston Journal*, March 18, 1859.

him no boy was to be allowed in school who did not obey regulations.³³

Wall's father made several visits to the school during the week. On the first of these he asked why the boy had been put out of school. Mason claimed that the boy refused to say the Commandments. Wall told him that he did not want the boy to say the Protestant version. To this Mason answered that it was a "slight matter to make so much trouble." Mason also mentioned to the father that he never insisted on verbal exactness. Finally Wall went home and got Thomas and brought him to school. Mason and Wall again began to argue about the Commandments. The master took a book from one of the scholars who was passing by and read them to the father. Now Wall was a man of no education, who could neither read nor write. This is important, for the question here is, just what did Mason read to him? The book he used was a spelling book, and when it was produced at the trial the words setting forth the Commandments had been altered. Where a disagreement existed between the Douay and King James version, the words of the King James version had been scratched out and the Douay version substituted. One question is, When was this done? Was it before Mason read the book to Wall or after? Mason claimed he did not do it. The other question, as has been already stated, is, What did Mason read to him? Wall said the Catholic version was repeated to him, Mason declared he read off the Protestant version. Whichever was read to him, it at least satisfied Wall. But the latter was a very devout man who must have known the Catholic Commandments. He also was insistent for his principle, so when, after hearing the Commandments, he approved them and said his boy could recite that form, then he certainly must have heard something that did not violate his conscience.³⁴ Mason made at least one compromise with Wall. He told him the boy could say, "hallowed" instead of "sanctified."³⁵ Young Wall was sent back

³³ *Ibid.*, March 19, 1859.

³⁴ *Boston Journal*, *loc. cit.*; *Boston Daily Traveller*, March 21, 1859; *Boston Post*, March 24, 1859; *Pilot*, April 2, 1859.

³⁵ *Pilot*, April 9, 1859.

to class, where Miss Shepard immediately pounced on him, informed him that his father had seen both versions, and knew they were the same (!), and made the boy say the Protestant Commandments.³⁶

Meanwhile, Father Wiget, of Saint Mary's Church, had heard of the affair, and on Sunday, March 13th, he made some remarks about it before the Sunday school. Unfortunately, we have no record of what he actually said, but it seems that he told the children not to say the Protestant version of the Commandments, but the Catholic. It also appears that he threatened to announce in church the name of any boy who disobeyed him.³⁷ At least, the boys claimed that these were his directions. Father Haskins, on the other hand, is said to have stated that the boys read into Father Wiget's remarks far more than the priest ever intended.³⁸

On Monday morning a crisis was precipitated. Before school began the boys gathered together, and agreed to use only the Catholic version of the Commandments and the Lord's Prayer.³⁹ Of this Father Haskins is reported to have stated that the boys used the priest's remarks as an excuse to get a holiday for themselves.⁴⁰ Miss Shepard began the opening exercises of the week by calling on each pupil to repeat the Ten Commandments. The Catholic boys refused to say the Protestant version. When she came to Wall, she passed him without asking for a recitation. Each boy who refused was whipped. Finally a lad named

³⁶ *Boston Journal*, March 18, 1859.

³⁷ *Boston Journal*, *loc. cit.*; *Boston Post*, March 19, 1859; *Boston Daily Traveller*, March 19, 1859.

³⁸ *Boston Journal*, March 21, 1859; *Boston Daily Traveller*, March 22, 1859.

I have made a very sincere effort to arrive at a certain conclusion here. I would like very much to know definitely what Father Wiget and Father Haskins did say. I have not been any too sure of the accounts given in the papers. Although the daily papers were filled with news of the trouble in the Eliot School and the trial, they are not very satisfactory. Especially in the case of the trial there is a strong suspicion that the reporters of the testimony allowed their sympathies to govern their accounts. In no case can a complete verbatim recording of the evidence be found. For this reason I have made no absolute statement in many instances, but have merely recorded the evidence as I found it.

³⁹ *Boston Daily Advertiser*, March 19, 1859.

⁴⁰ *Boston Journal*, March 28, 1859.

Rohan was reached. He followed the example of the others, and then, rather than be punished, fled from the room.⁴¹ The teacher then went back to young Wall and demanded that he recite the Protestant version. Of course, the boy would not do this. He first tried to get out of it by saying that he did not know it. Then he admitted that his father and the priest had told him not to say it.

At the same time that this was going on, Mr. Mason noticed that many boys in his room did not say the Commandments when they were recited in unison. He mentioned this to a Mr. Hazelton, a School Committee member, who was in the building.⁴² Hazelton then began to go from room to room to find out what the situation was. In Miss Shepard's class he tried to force young Wall to read the Commandments from the King James version of the Scriptures.⁴³ Wall staunchly refused. Hazelton soon discovered that two thirds of the boys had the same attitude. Then Hazelton, evidently deciding that Wall was the leader, advised the teacher to turn him over to Mr. Cook, the sub-master.⁴⁴ Cook was called in. Miss Shepard made her complaint. Wall was taken to Cook's classroom and seated on the platform. This took place during recess. After recreation Cook said to the class, "Here's a boy that refuses to repeat the Ten Commandments, and I will whip him till he yields if it takes the whole forenoon."⁴⁵ The lad, thoroughly frightened but unyielding in his determination not to disobey his father's command, said he would say them if his father permitted him. But that would not suffice. And so Cook took a heavy rattan and scourged his hands for one half hour, stopping every so often to ask if Thomas would repeat the Commandments. Each time he refused. At the end of the thirty minutes the boy's hands were cut and bleeding. He yielded to Cook's demands. The evidence given in the *Boston Advertiser* would seem to indicate that the youth fainted.⁴⁶ Mason's part in this particular phase of the affair was despicable. He knew Thomas was being

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, March 18, 1859.

⁴² *Boston Daily Traveller*, March 15, 1859.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, March 21, 1859.

⁴⁴ *Boston Journal*, *loc. cit.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Boston Daily Advertiser*, March 18, 1859.

whipped. He knew he had told Mr. Wall that he did not insist on verbal exactness. Yet he made no effort to see if this privilege had been accorded the boy.⁴⁷ Wall's parents had to take him to a doctor to have his hands treated.⁴⁸

Once more Mason informed Micah Dyer of what had happened. Dyer, after consulting with Mayor Lincoln, went to the school in the afternoon and ordered all who would not recite the Commandments to leave. About one hundred Catholic boys were discharged. Naturally this was not done without noise and excitement, so Dyer sent for a policeman to guard the building.⁴⁹

On Tuesday morning Mason opened the school with prayer. A large number of Catholic boys refused to join. Mason told them they had better stay home. Three hundred did not come back in the afternoon.⁵⁰ On Wednesday a number of pupils who had left came back to school, but on Thursday they were again missing.⁵¹ On Monday of the next week the Catholic boys who remained all brought their catechisms with them, prepared to recite the Catholic Commandments.⁵² But they were given no opportunity. Micah Dyer was on hand and discharged them.⁵³

This trouble was confined to the Eliot School almost exclusively. There was a slight disturbance among the little tots at the Hanover Street Primary School.⁵⁴ A few pupils in the Lyman School, East Boston, also declined to say the Protestant version of the Commandments.⁵⁵ One fact which lends strength to suspicion of the motives of the Eliot School authorities is that a great number of children who were instructed by Father Wiget went to the Mayhew School. There was absolutely no trouble in that school.⁵⁶ One cannot help feeling that there was a deliberate plot at the Eliot School to embarrass the Catholic pupils.

⁴⁷ *Boston Journal*, March 19, 1859.

⁴⁸ *Boston Daily Traveller*, March 19, 1859.

⁴⁹ *Boston Daily Traveller*, March 21, 1859.

⁵⁰ *Boston Journal*, March 15, 1859.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, March 16, 1859.

⁵² The Commandments were said only once a week, on Monday.

⁵³ *Boston Journal*, March 21, 1859.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, March 16, 1859.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, March 17, 1859; *Boston Daily Traveller*, March 18, 1859.

⁵⁶ *Pilot*, April 2, 1859.

Bishop Fitzpatrick could not ignore this crisis. Having attempted to keep the peace by not making an issue of the School Committee regulations, he now found a quarrel thrust upon him. It was a serious matter. The entire city was excited. Newspapers were devoting much space to it. Ministers were taking up the subject in their sermons.⁵⁷ Politicians surely would make political capital of it. The Bishop wrote in his *Memoranda*:

Much excitement has been created throughout the city this week in relation the [*sic*] treatment of Catholic pupils in the common schools. An article in the school regulations gives the teachers the power of calling upon the pupils to recite the ten commandments, chant the Lord's prayer, sing the psalm known among protestants as *Old Hundred*, etc. On Monday a catholic boy at the Eliot school in the North part of the city refused to repeat the commandments because he was required to say them in the Protestant form. He was severely and even cruelly beaten and then expelled from school with a great number of others who followed his example. This places the children in great danger. There is a law of the state which authorizes the arrest of children who do not attend school. Under this law they can be taken from their parents and sent to a penal institution at Westboro College the reform school. There they may be kept until 21 years old cut off from all catholic instruction. At the same time it is impossible to open catholic schools. To buy lots and erect buildings for this purpose would cost at least half a million of dollars, and then the annual expenses for the support of such schools would be, at the lowest estimate 30 or 40 thousand dollars. Already we find it almost impossible to provide churches for the hundreds of thousands of poor people whom the last ten years have sent to our shores. The provision of schools is then plainly impossible. No redress can be expected by petition to the authorities for the state is ruled by a vast majority of persecuting bigots who, a few years ago, were bound by oath, as members of the know-nothing party, to oppress Catholics. The very laws alluded to were framed, no doubt, for the express purpose of

⁵⁷ *Boston Journal*, March 21, 1859.

corrupting the faith of Catholic children. The only alternative at present seems to be that the children, under open protest, submit to the tyranny exercised over them, but at the same time to loathe and detest its enactments. This very sense of unjust oppression may, with God's grace, strengthen them in their attachment to the faith.⁵⁸

To restore peace the Bishop did two things. First, he urged the parents to send their children back to school,⁵⁹ and, secondly, he wrote a masterly exposition of the Church's position and laid it before the Boston School Committee. This letter was Bishop Fitzpatrick at his best. Conciliatory, he was not weak, but firm and unhesitating in his declarations. His defense was simple, direct, logical, clear. It went straight to the source of conflict and skillfully exposed it. He wrote graciously, and did not give offense. To an unprejudiced reader, he was convincing. It is one of the finest defenses of the Catholic Church that has ever been clothed in the English language.

To the President and Members of the School Committee of Boston.

The undersigned has learned that a meeting of the School Committee for the city of Boston, is to be held this afternoon, and doubts not that the unpleasant difficulties which recently have sprung up between the teachers and the Catholic pupils in certain schools will form part of the matter for deliberation, which on the occasion, will be brought before the members of that honorable board.

He also thinks and hopes that it will not be regarded as an act of presumption or obtrusiveness, on his part to offer some few remarks upon the subject, and to set forth, as clearly as may be the nature and foundation of the objections which Catholics feel and make against certain articles of the regulations which govern the exercises of our public schools. He is persuaded that the committee desire to know and weigh all the considerations which may have a reasonable bearing on the question at issue; and he even thinks that his testimony

⁵⁸ *Memoranda*, March 15, 1859.

⁵⁹ *The Memorial History of Boston*, III, 535.

as to what regards Catholics in the case, may be to them more satisfactory than would be that of some others.

These reasons induce him to write.

The undersigned would therefore first state, in general, that the objections raised by the Catholic pupils, and by their parents, are not affected scruples — are not, as some would seem to think, fetches or pretences, devised simply for the purpose of creating a difficulty. They are serious and solid objections, founded in individual conscience and individual faith.

To show this, it may be well to divide the matter, and set apart for consideration three particular points, out of which, and against which, mainly, those objections arise.

These points are: — 1st, The enforced use of the Protestant version of the Bible. 2d, The enforced learning and reciting of the Ten Commandments in their Protestant form. 3d, The enforced union in chanting the Lord's Prayer and other religious chants.

On these three points the undersigned respectfully begs leave to remark as follows:

I. Catholics cannot, under any circumstances, acknowledge, receive and use, as a complete collection and faithful version of the inspired books which compose the written word of God, the English Protestant translation of the Bible. Still less can they so acknowledge, accept or use it, when its enforcement as such is coupled expressly with the rejection of that version which their own Church approves and adopts as being correct and authentic. And yet this is required of them by law. The law, as administered, holds forth the Protestant version to the Catholic child, and says, "receive this as the Bible." The Catholic child answers, "I cannot so receive it." The law, as administered, says, "you must, or else you must be scourged, and finally banished from the school."

II. The acceptance and the recital of the Decalogue, under the form and words in which Protestants clothe it, is offensive to the conscience and belief of Catholics; inasmuch as that form and those words are viewed by them, and have not unfrequently been used by their adversaries, as a means of attack upon certain tenets and practices, which, under the teachings of the Church, they hold as true and sacred.

III. The chaunting of the Lord's Prayer, of psalms, of hymns, addressed to God, performed by many persons in unison, being neither a scholastic exercise, nor a recreation, can only be regarded as an act of public worship. Indeed it is professedly intended as such in the regulations which govern our public schools. It would seem that the principles which guide Protestants and Catholics in relation to communion in public worship are widely different. Protestants, however diverse may be their religious opinions, — Trinitarians who assert that Jesus Christ is true God, and Unitarians who deny that He is true God, — find no difficulty to offer in brotherhood a blended and apparently harmonious worship, and in so doing they give and receive mutual satisfaction, mutual edification. The Catholic cannot act in this manner. He cannot present himself before the Divine presence in what would be for him a merely simulated union of prayer and adoration. His Church expressly forbids him so to do. She considers indifference in matters of religion, indifference as to the distinction of positive doctrines in faith, as a great evil which promiscuous worship would tend to spread more widely and increase. Hence the prohibition of such worship, and the Catholic cannot join in it without doing violence to his sense of religious duty.

These three points the undersigned simply sets forth as facts appertaining to the faith of Catholics, and to their conscience in matters of religion. Any discussion or show of arguments to prove the reasonableness of such belief and of such conscience would seem to him out of place; inasmuch as the question to be solved is not why people believe, but what they believe; save always the laws of common morality and the respect due to all such things as may be essential or integral to the Constitution under which the Commonwealth is governed.

The undersigned will not bring his communication to a close without disavowing the slightest thought of imputing to the gentlemen who framed the school regulations any design to disregard the rights or the feelings of Catholics. His personal knowledge of several amongst them excludes such an idea from his own mind, and the bare inspection of the rules is, he thinks, enough to prove that good and just and honest intentions presided in their councils.

The undersigned begs leave to add one word more in conclusion. It has been supposed that, because he was silent, he was satisfied with the state of our public schools. This is not so. He has always entertained the sentiments which he now expresses. But whenever and wherever an effort has been made by Catholics to effect such changes as they desired, the question has been distorted from its true sense, and a false issue has been set before the non-Catholic community. It has been represented that the design was to eliminate and practically annihilate the Bible. This has never been true; and yet this has always been believed, and a rallying cry, "To the rescue of the Bible!" has resounded on every side. Angry passions have been roused, violent acts have been committed, and, almost invariably, the last condition of things has been worse than the first.

In the light of this experience, any attempt to bring about a change seemed calculated to cause much strife, but very little good, and, therefore, not advisable.

Today, however, circumstances, known to all, seem to make it a duty for the undersigned to act and to speak. He does so without reluctance, since it is a duty; and he hopes that what he has said will be received, as it is spoken, with a spirit of conciliation, and with a true disposition to promote good will and charity amongst all classes of citizens.⁶⁰

This letter was received by the School Committee on Monday afternoon, March 21st. There was considerable debate about it, centring around the question as to whether or not it should be referred to a committee for action. Finally, it was decided to postpone it indefinitely. This should not lead to the conclusion that the Committee was unwilling to do anything about the trouble. Many members adopted a favorable attitude, but there was just enough dissentious spirit displayed to warrant avoiding action in order to prevent a serious quarrel.⁶¹

Young Wall's parents brought charges in court against Cook, on the ground that he had maliciously assaulted their boy.

⁶⁰ *Pilot*, March 26, 1859.

⁶¹ *Boston Journal*, March 22, 1859; *Pilot*, March 26, 1859.

Sidney Webster and Wilder Dwight prosecuted the case, while Henry F. Durant acted for the defendant. The trial, which was, by the way, one of the *causes célèbres* of the day, was about what was to be expected. Dwight, for the prosecution, tried to keep to several simple points. Could a Catholic scholar be forced to use a version of the Sacred Scriptures when forbidden by his Church? Could a scholar be punished when he disobeyed his teacher at his father's orders?⁶² The defense counsel, on the other hand, immediately thrust the case into the field of altercation by claiming that the issue was whether or not the Bible should be used in the schools. He charged that the Catholics were not seeking toleration, but were trying to stop the Protestants from following their own religious beliefs. Here, he claimed, was a conspiracy to drive the Bible out of the schools, and as a result, "in obedience to a dark and dangerous power whose hand we now see, an open rebellion broke out all over the school."⁶³ Durant was allowed the widest possible latitude during the trial, and was able to introduce evidence wholly irrelevant to the case, but of a nature capable of arousing the most violent prejudice.

Judge Maine's decision, delivered after some days of consideration, ignored entirely the question as to whether Wall's right, under the Massachusetts Constitution, to religious liberty and freedom of conscience had been violated. The law, he said, demanded that the Scriptures be read in the common English version. Pupils could be required to chant the Lord's Prayer and say the Ten Commandments in the version prescribed by those who administered the law. When Thomas Wall was sent to school, his father gave up as much of his parental rights as was necessary to secure the carrying-out of the law. His son was punished for insubordination. Every blow struck was administered for his continued resistance. No injustice had been done to Thomas, because of the fact that, when he complied with the law, the punishment ceased.⁶⁴

In the meantime some members of the School Committee

⁶² *Boston Journal*, March 19, 1859; *Boston Daily Advertiser*, March 19, 1859.

⁶³ *Boston Journal*, *loc. cit.* ⁶⁴ *Pilot*, April 16, 1859.

were trying to bring about an equitable adjustment of the situation. On April 25th the Rev. Dr. Lothrop proposed that the rules be so changed that in the future the Sacred Scriptures and the Lord's Prayer should be read by the teacher alone. Micah Dyer was able to have this regulation rejected by the narrow margin of one vote.⁶⁵ At this meeting, Dyer also revealed that he was still discharging children from school. It is clear, however, that the excitement was gradually quieting down because of Bishop Fitzpatrick's counsel to the parents to send the children back to school, and by June only forty pupils, according to Dyer, were absent.⁶⁶

In the fall of 1859 another fact in the case came to light. Some members of the School Committee were disgusted with Dyer, especially since he had assumed the position that the School Committee had no right to interfere with affairs of the Eliot School.⁶⁷ Fearing, probably, that he would once more embark on his crusade, now that school had reopened, they asked the City Solicitor, John P. Healy, who had the right to expel pupils from school. Healy replied that only the general School Committee could do this. No District Committee had such power. Hence Dyer's acts were all illegal and invalid.⁶⁸

The city elections of 1859 saw a real effort towards adjustment. Father Haskins was elected to the School Committee — the first time a Catholic had ever held this office. The obnoxious regulation was changed so that only the teacher was to recite the Lord's Prayer and read the Scriptures.⁶⁹ Yet, even with these rules there were still teachers in Boston who sought to force the Protestant Bible and prayers on Catholic children. As late as 1865 Father Haskins had to ask the School Committee to call the District Committees' attention to the fact that scholars could not be forced to read the Sacred Scriptures and recite the Lord's Prayer.⁷⁰

⁶⁵ *Atlas and Daily Bee*, April 27, 1859; *Pilot*, May 7, 1859.

⁶⁶ *Atlas and Daily Bee*, June 10, 1859.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.* ⁶⁸ *Pilot*, Oct. 15, 1859.

⁶⁹ *Annual Report of the School Committee of the City of Boston, 1859* (Boston, 1860), chap. VIII, sect. 5, p. 250.

⁷⁰ *Pilot*, Jan. 21, 1865.

V

Outside Boston the custom of requiring Catholic children to participate in the use of the Protestant Bible and prayers continued to be a cause of bitter feelings and contentions for years. The Civil War, however, brought a change. The participation of the Irish in this conflict was so generous that there was a marked breakdown in the opposition to them and their religion. In some cases this was permanent, in others merely temporary. Therefore, when in January, 1862, Father John J. Power, of St. Ann's Church, Worcester, and a number of prominent citizens of that city, such as the Mayor and the Superintendent of the public schools, petitioned the General Court that "no scholar in any of the Public Schools of this Commonwealth shall be compelled to read or recite any particular form of prayer against the wish of the parent, and furthermore that the reading of the Bible be confined to the teacher and that no scholar be compelled to read any particular version of the Bible against the wishes of his parents,"⁷¹ the petition was given a favorable reception.

The cause of this petition is to be found in Grafton. In that town a boy was told by his parents not to read the non-Catholic Bible in school. He obeyed, and was expelled. For some time he was barred from the school. Then the School Committee began to doubt whether they had a legal basis for their act and the lad was permitted to return to school. But the teacher was ordered not to instruct the boy until he obeyed the rule regarding reading of the Bible. Father Power had been disturbed by many such cases, and finally, when this one took place, he decided to seek relief.⁷²

The Committee on Education reported a law which stated that school committees could require the daily reading by the teacher of some part of the Bible in the common English version.⁷³ This was accepted by the House. The Senate concurred after some debate. Some Senators, however, felt that the new law would only make matters worse by throwing the question

⁷¹ *Acts*, 1862, chap. 57. ⁷² *Ibid.*; *Pilot*, Feb. 1, 1862. ⁷³ *Acts*, 1862, chap. 57.

of reading the Bible in the schools into the election contests for school committee in every town in the State. Others concluded that the bill would be interpreted as intended to exclude the pupils from Bible-reading entirely. Hence a movement to reframe the bill was not objected to very greatly. Even Tucker, of Suffolk, who was a Catholic and represented the Catholic interests, declared that his co-religionists did not want to exclude reading of the Scriptures from school, not even the King James version. They merely asked that their children should not be compelled to take part in that reading. The result was the passage of a motion to reconsider the bill, and a substitute was offered by Bacon, of Middlesex. This provided that:

The Bible in the common English version shall be read daily in every public school, either by the teacher or the scholars, as the School Committee shall direct; but no scholar or teacher who shall declare that he has conscientious scruples against reading from such version shall be required to do so, nor shall any scholar be required to read therefrom, whose parent or guardian shall declare that he has conscientious scruples against allowing him to do so.⁷⁴

This bill, after some minor modifications had been made, was passed, and was sent down to the House. A spirited debate over it took place amongst the Representatives. This discussion was conspicuous for its lack of violent expression of sentiment hostile to the Catholic Church. Every opposition speaker was careful to claim that he did not act out of prejudice and would not allow himself to be influenced by disrespect for Catholics.

But the House, despite its profession of a desire to be considerate of Irish Catholics, was not inclined to go too far in relieving them of their burden. The law that was passed changed the 1855 Act by eliminating the requirement that the common English version should be used and stated that the Bible should be read "without note or comment."⁷⁵ For all

⁷⁴ *Boston Daily Traveller*, Jan. 21, 1862.

⁷⁵ *Boston Daily Traveller*, Jan. 29, 1862.

practical purposes this meant that in complying school committees could select the version they wished. Catholics would have to control committee elections in order to secure real relief.

The bill went back to the Senate. Here Twombly, of Suffolk, alleging that he wanted to put an end to the whole dispute, attempted to have the matter dropped. He proposed to settle everything by salving the feelings of the Catholics. This was to be accomplished by electing Bishop Fitzpatrick to the Board of Overseers of Harvard University. He failed to accomplish his purpose.⁷⁶ The Senate appointed a committee to confer with a House committee and arrange a compromise.⁷⁷ The bill they finally presented eliminated everything that could be objectionable to the Catholics. It read:

The school committee shall require the daily reading of some portion of the Bible, without written note or oral comment, in the public schools, but they shall require no scholar to read from any particular version, whose parents or guardian shall declare that he has conscientious scruples against allowing him to read therefrom, . . .⁷⁸

This bill was passed in both the House and Senate without too much opposition.

There can be no doubt that one of the most influential causes for this radical change in educational policy was the participation of the Irish Catholics in the Civil War. Time and a more tolerant and sympathetic populace would have accomplished the same result. But the change from the angry days of the Wall case to the kindly spirit of 1862 could never have been effected in such a short space of time if the Catholic Bishop, priests, and people had not given wholehearted support to the cause of the Union. The debates in the House and Senate amply prove this, while *The Pilot*, in reporting passage of the bill, remarked:

This is a long stride from the Know-Nothingism of 1854, the remnants of which seem to have been pretty nearly dis-

⁷⁶ *Boston Evening Transcript*, Feb. 10, 1862.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.* . . . ⁷⁸ *Acts*, 1862, chap. 57.

posed of by the Civil War. So we at least have received good out of evil. The act is a practical acknowledgment of the loyalty displayed by the adopted citizens in this hour of national trial.⁷⁹

But some school authorities would not comply with the law. In 1864 Leonard G. Spalding, schoolmaster of the public school in Shirley, was brought into court, charged with having cruelly beaten a boy and girl because they refused to read the Protestant Scriptures.

John and Mary Hehir were told by their parents not to read the common English version, which Spalding insisted on despite the law. On the 12th of February the children were whipped for refusing to use the Protestant Scriptures. The parents, as required by law, notified the School Committee of their objections.⁸⁰ Despite this the master persisted, and on February 17th again chastised them. The mother on the next day went to the school to investigate. The master refused to yield to the law, demanded that the children comply with his wishes in the presence of the mother, and when they refused, abused them savagely. The boy was beaten with a heavy stick on the back, face, legs, and hands with such ferocity that he was badly marked by the blows. Then the master bent the lobe of the boy's ear over a ruler, and tortured the lad by beating it with a stick. The girl also was maltreated, and then locked in a little, narrow, unventilated closet for an hour.⁸¹

A warrant was sworn out against Spalding. He was arrested and brought into court. Charles Francis Donnelly, then just beginning his career as a lawyer, was appointed to represent the Commonwealth. The defense's case was disgraceful. The meanest and lowest accusations were made against the parents. Perjury was not eschewed. But Spalding was not to be saved by this means. He was found guilty, and was held for trial before the Superior Court of Middlesex County.⁸² Let Mr. Donnelly tell what happened there!

At that time it was neither politic nor wise to offend the Catholic body on the part of anyone in control in this state

⁷⁹ *Pilot*, March 1, 1862. ⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, April 23, 1864.

⁸¹ *Ibid.* ⁸² *Ibid.*, April 23, 1864.

because they were being recruited largely for the defense of our common country. The result of that prosecution was the commitment of the master to await the action of the grand jury in Middlesex county on the ground that the government had made out a case, but the grand jury suppressed the bill. We heard nothing more about it.⁸³

Here again is evidence that the Civil War was breaking down barriers. Massachusetts citizens, fed for years and years on lies and malicious propaganda, were slowly learning that Catholics and their Church were not un-American and could hold a worthy position in a democracy. Mr. Donnelly's statement, made years later when Catholic schools were again under attack, is, perhaps, somewhat censorious when taken from the context. It implies that mere advantage to the State caused many of its citizens to refrain from molesting the Church. Now that is true of this particular period, and Mr. Donnelly meant that, but he also intended it to be understood that it was a start towards a better understanding, for he went on to say:

Now I want to tell you, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee, what followed. Within twenty years of that time the people of that town [Shirley] employed a Catholic school-teacher to teach in their public schools. That is the progress of toleration, that is the progress of liberty in Massachusetts.⁸⁴

The changed situation also brought about the granting of Holy Cross College's charter. During the years following the rejection of the petition for a charter in 1849, the old system of carrying on business affairs under the Georgetown College charter had to be retained. Even graduates had to receive their degrees from Georgetown. Governor Andrew, while he was in office, became very friendly with the Worcester Jesuits and repeatedly urged them to apply for their charter. They finally

⁸³ Katherine Eleanor Conway, Mabel Ward Common, *Charles Francis Donnelly; A Memoir With an Account of the Hearings on a Bill for the Inspection of Private Schools in Massachusetts in 1888-1889* (New York, 1909), p. 121.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

did so.⁸⁵ Their petition was sent to the House of Representatives in November, 1864.⁸⁶ The Committee on Education reported a bill to the Senate granting a charter on March 8, 1865. A sign of the times is to be found in it. In 1863 Boston College was incorporated. Its charter contained a clause prohibiting the exclusion of students because of religious beliefs. But when the question of a charter came up this second time for Holy Cross, no mention was made of religious freedom. Truly, things had changed! The College now was given a charter which omitted all prohibitions concerning religious tests! Apparently, however, there was some sort of an attempt to put this into the document. Among the original papers relating to the bill there is one which carries in handwriting a copy of Section 6 of the Tufts College charter. This stipulates that no instructor shall be required to hold any "particular religious opinion as a test of office," and no student was to be refused admission because of his religious opinions.⁸⁷ But this suggestion received no support. And so the College now was recommended to receive the charter it had sought years ago. The only vestige of the old controversy was a provision that granting of the charter should not be "considered as any pledge of the Commonwealth that pecuniary aid shall hereinafter be granted to the College."⁸⁸

The charter easily passed in the Senate, but it was expected that in the House its old enemy, Erastus Hopkins, would work mightily against it. Indeed, it was felt that in the House opposition would be vehement and successful.⁸⁹ But it was not. The bill was well received, was quickly passed, and on March 24, 1865, Governor Andrew signed it.⁹⁰

⁸⁵ E. I. Devitt, S.J., *History of the Maryland-New York Province* (Woodstock Letters, LXIV, 204-237).

⁸⁶ *Acts, 1865*, chap. 99.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ *Memoranda*, March 10, 1865.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, March 28, 1865.

CHAPTER X

EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

I

WHEN BISHOP FITZPATRICK gave St. Mary's Church in Boston to the Society of Jesus, he had a very definite plan in mind. The Jesuits were to establish themselves in the parish. Then they were to open a school for boys and from this gradually develop a college.¹ Neither the Bishop nor the Jesuits, however, had any idea of starting the college for some years. Yet an opportunity to begin arose only a few months after the Jesuits came to Boston. On April 12, 1848, the Hancock school-house on Hanover Street was sold at auction by the City of Boston, and a Mr. Thomas Kennedy without any authorization bought it in the name of Father McElroy and himself. Although this was totally unexpected, Father McElroy, nevertheless, consulted with the Bishop, and they decided to ask the Jesuits at Georgetown College to take over the building and open a school.² Unfortunately, however, the Georgetown authorities were not able at this time to assume such a burden, and the plan was abandoned.³

In 1850 another project was astir. In the back of Holy Trinity Church, Boston, there were several large vestries, used as living quarters by the priest stationed there. Bishop Fitzpatrick proposed to turn these into classrooms.⁴ However, this plan to make this particular school the foundation of a college was never carried out because Father McElroy conceived a far more magnificent project. He decided that, instead of establishing a school as the adjunct of some already existing church and from this developing a college, it would be far better to

¹ Bishop Fitzpatrick to Father Verhaegen, S.J., July 27, 1848 (*Fordham Arch.*, 215 F 2).

² *Memoranda*, April 12, 1848.

³ *Ibid.*, April 18, 1848.

⁴ *Memoranda*, July 5, 1850.

make an entirely new start. His idea was to build a church in some favorable section of the city and then, when the revenues of the church could give some financial support, to erect the college.⁵ This led, as related elsewhere, to the first attempt to buy the jail lands. The failure to obtain this site was followed by a modification of the Jesuit's plans. The Otis schoolhouse on Lancaster Street was bought, and the Bishop and Father McElroy decided to use it for a boys' school. It was hoped that some day it would develop into a college.⁶ But, as will be recalled, Father McElroy was unable to secure sufficient land for his purposes. Then came the long conflict over the jail lands, its settlement, and the purchase in 1857 of three acres of land on Harrison Avenue. Here in 1858 Boston College and the Immaculate Conception Church were started. The college building was finished in February, 1859.⁷ But there were still many obstacles to be surmounted before the Bishop's long-cherished plan could be fully realized.

Father McElroy was obliged to spend much more money than he had originally planned. He had to purchase additional land. The City of Boston sold three lots to him at a greatly reduced price, yet even then he had to pay eighteen thousand dollars.⁸ When the foundations were excavated, springs were uncovered. These had to be drained away from the site. An iron fence had to be erected along the Harrison Avenue side of the property. This was costly. Then came the Civil War. The economic strain of this struggle caused a great decrease in revenue. Most serious of all, however, was the toll that long years of labor took upon the health of Father McElroy. Just at the time when his great executive ability was most sorely needed, he had to be relieved of his duties as pastor in 1863.⁹ Some months later he left Boston. He was succeeded by the saintly Father John Bapst, S.J. The latter faced a most dismal

⁵ Father McElroy, S.J., to Father Brocard, S.J., March 26, 1851 (*Fordham Arch.*, 219 W 11 A).

⁶ *Memoranda*, June 1, 1852.

⁷ Father Gilbert J. Garraghan, S.J., "Origin of Boston College," *Thought*, XVII (1942), 646.

⁸ They were worth \$30,000. ⁹ Father Garraghan, S.J., *op. cit.*, p. 647 *et seq.*

prospect. Many who were acquainted with the situation believed that he would be forced to abandon the entire project and even give up the property.¹⁰ But they did not know the real character of this priest, who had so bravely endured the hardships of Indian Old Town and whose courage had been increased rather than diminished by his horrible experience at Ellsworth. He determined to reduce the enormous debt. In doing this he received very substantial aid from Andrew Carney, who promised that if the Jesuits would raise twenty thousand dollars within six months after November 1, 1863, he would donate an equal amount. For a time it seemed that they would never be able to fulfill this condition. By the end of February, after the most strenuous efforts, little more than ten thousand dollars had been collected. Then it was decided to conduct a great fair in Music Hall. It was a tremendous success.¹¹ But, with the objective gained, it was feared for a time that Boston College would not receive the Carney donation, for the philanthropist died on the very day that the fair opened.¹² However, when his will was read, it was found that he had made provision for his pledge.¹³

Up to this time the Jesuits had been unable to begin secular educational activities. When the college building was completed, sufficient men for the staff could not be furnished.¹⁴ While waiting for professors to become available, it was decided to open a house of studies for Jesuit scholastics. This seminary was commenced in September, 1860. The financial burden was very heavy. When the Civil War began to lessen the income, it was found that it would be impossible to continue. The seminary was closed at the end of the 1862-1863 session.¹⁵ Andrew Carney's proposal, however, caused the Jesuits to promise that, if the people would aid them in successfully meeting its conditions, all obstacles in the way of opening the college would be removed.¹⁶ Happily, the people did respond, and on September 5, 1864, the first students entered the doors of Bos-

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 654. ¹¹ *Pilot*, Feb. 27, May 21, 1864.

¹² *Memoranda*, April 1, 1864. ¹³ *Ibid.*, April 10, 1864.

¹⁴ Father Garraghan, S.J., "Origins of Boston College," p. 646.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 652. ¹⁶ *Pilot*, Feb. 27, 1864.

ton College. At that time boys were to be admitted after the completion of their grammar school education. The course of instruction was to last for seven years, and embraced English and the Classical Languages, Mathematics, the various branches of Philosophy, Chemistry, "with," as an early advertisement quaintly stated, "the usual accessories."¹⁷ Each term lasted five months. The College began with classes for the first year only. It was expected that new classes would be added each year until the full course was finished. In these first days the College had forty students.¹⁸ By the end of the scholastic year there were forty-eight.¹⁹ Father John Bapst was the President. Under him were two priests, Father Robert Fulton, S.J., who was known as the Prefect of Schools, and Father Peter McDermott, S.J. Two scholastics completed the staff. They were Mr. Peter P. Fitzpatrick, S.J., and Mr. James Doonan, S.J.²⁰

II

Meanwhile Holy Cross College had been running the gamut of gain and loss. Three years after it had been opened, it had an enrollment of one hundred and thirty students.²¹ The original building was now overcrowded and it was necessary to build a new wing. This section was put into operation on April 22, 1847.²² For several years after this, Holy Cross College continued to prosper. The first class was graduated in 1849. Amongst its members was James A. Healy, who later was ordained a priest of the Boston Diocese, became the Bishop's first Secretary and Chancellor, and finished a noteworthy career as the second Bishop of Portland.

But in 1852 terrible misfortune befell the institution. On July 14th, while returning from a visit to Fitchburg, Bishop Fitzpatrick stopped at Worcester and had dinner with Father Gibson. About two-thirty in the afternoon a boy rushed by the rectory shouting that the College was on fire. Ascending

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Aug. 27, 1864, advertisement. ¹⁸ *Catholic Almanac*, 1865.

¹⁹ *Pilot*, July 8, 1865. ²⁰ *Catholic Almanac*, 1865.

²¹ *Pilot*, May 1, 1847. ²² *Ibid.*

to the upper platform in the tower of St. John's Church, the Bishop and Father Gibson, looking toward the College, saw that the upper stories of the old section were afire. They immediately started for the scene. When they arrived, the entire main building was burning. The Worcester firemen, hampered by lack of a water supply near the fire, were desperately trying to get their engines into position to draw from the Blackstone River. An hour passed before this was accomplished. The original college building, meanwhile, was totally consumed, and by the time the firemen were ready to go into action, only the new east wing remained to be saved.²³

When the fire was extinguished, the cherished foundation of Bishop Fenwick was in great part reduced to a hollow fire-scarred shell, scattered and broken furniture, water-soaked piles of books. Dejected students, whose clothing and property had been entirely destroyed, stood around in dismal groups. Father Ciampi, S.J., the Rector, with exactly eight dollars in his pocket, faced the disheartening prospect of reestablishing a heavily indebted college on which not one cent of insurance had been carried.²⁴

The final chapter in the history of Holy Cross College might have been written under the shadow of its ruined walls. But the firm insistence and determination of Bishop Fitzpatrick saved it. He overcame human obstacles that would have closed forever the career of a great educational institution.²⁵ The task of rebuilding was undertaken. The Diocese gave generous financial support. No sooner was the fire out than the Bishop gave the Rector one hundred dollars from his own small funds,²⁶ and during the reconstruction period the Jesuits went from parish to parish collecting money.²⁷ By September, 1853,

²³ *Memoranda*, July 14, 1852; Father Ciampi, S.J., to Father Aschwanden, S.J., July 27, 1852 (*Fordham Arch.*, 220 P 24); *Pilot*, July 24, 1852.

²⁴ *Memoranda*, *loc. cit.*; Father Ciampi, S.J., to the Provincial, July 14, 1852 (*Fordham Arch.*, 220 P 9).

²⁵ *Memoranda*, July 22, 28, Aug. 5, 1852.

²⁶ Father McElroy to the Provincial, July 23, 1852 (*Fordham Arch.*, 220 P 17).

²⁷ Father Gibson to Father Aschwanden, S.J., July 14, 1852 (*Fordham Arch.*, 220 P 11); Father Ciampi, S.J., to Father Kennedy, S.J., July 30, 1852 (*Fordham Arch.*, 220 P 24); Father Ciampi, S.J., to Father Fenwick, S.J., Oct. 4, 1852 (*Fordham Arch.*, 221 B 7); *Pilot*, June 18, Sept. 3, 1853.

the new building was finished, and on October 3rd classes were resumed.²⁸

The Jesuits had an uphill fight for many years after this. The enrollment fell off considerably and they were carrying a huge debt. The Civil War, from the financial point of view, greatly hampered them. But that conflict, as has already been seen, did aid in securing their charter, and at its end the Jesuits would, in a few years, make many extensions and improvements.

At the close of the Fitzpatrick period much had been accomplished in laying the foundations of Catholic higher education. With his background as a professor during his days at Saint-Sulpice in Montreal, it was only natural for the Bishop to be interested in affording to his people an opportunity to perfect and extend their education. And so it is not at all surprising to find that, despite the many heavy burdens the Diocese had to bear, Bishop Fitzpatrick began to work for a college in Boston from the moment he took charge. The results fully justified his decision. It gave to almost every boy who had any means at all an opportunity to secure advanced instruction. Since it was exclusively a day-school, and was run by men who had dedicated their lives to poverty, the tuition was very low and within the reach of many youths. Those who wanted a background for a professional career could secure it there. It was important, too, for the future clergy of the Diocese, for within its walls the studies preparatory to entrance into a seminary could be made. In fact, this has been one of Boston College's great achievements, for of the hundreds of priests who have served the Diocese, the great majority claim this foundation of Bishop Fitzpatrick as their Alma Mater. As for Holy Cross College, although Bishop Fitzpatrick was not its founder, still he can justly be called its second founder, for he truly saved it from the embers of a disastrous fire and gave it what was practically a new career. Looking back to those days with a realization of the difficulties under which the Bishop labored, surely one can declare that here was great achievement.

²⁸ *Woodstock Letters*, LXIV (1935), pp. 204-227; *Pilot*, Sept. 3, 1853.

III

Although Bishop Fitzpatrick had very little money to invest in schools, it is nevertheless true that he did begin the first real expansion of a diocesan parochial school system. When he opened his career as Bishop of Boston, he inherited from his predecessor merely the girls' school that was conducted by the Sisters of Charity, who had charge of St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum. In December, 1846, Sister Mary Joseph, who had formerly been stationed at the Ursuline Convent, Charlestown, wrote to the Bishop, and asked him to reëstablish the Ursulines in Boston. He refused to do this.²⁹ Only a few weeks later another letter came from the Ursuline Community of Charleston, South Carolina, requesting that they be allowed to open a boarding and free school. Their petition was denied on the ground that it would cost too much money to secure a suitable location.³⁰ Perhaps the opinion may be ventured that another reason for the rejection of these applications of the Ursulines was that Bishop Fitzpatrick feared it would be imprudent to bring back to Boston an order that had been so direly mistreated.

But he was not going to allow Catholic education to suffer entire neglect. And so on August 29, 1848, Mother Étienne, Superior of the Sisters of Charity of Emmitsburg, arrived in Boston at the invitation of the Bishop to confer with him about opening a school for girls.³¹ It will be recalled that it was at this time that the Bishop had decided to close St. Mary's Orphan Asylum and use the building for a parochial school. He planned to turn it over to the Emmitsburg community. Mother Étienne agreed to this and promised to send the necessary Sisters.³² On January 10, 1849, two of the Sisters arrived.³³ The school was opened during the last few days of this month.³⁴

The Jesuits were, of course, at this time in charge of St. Mary's parish, where this new school was situated. Father Mc-

²⁹ *Memoranda*, Dec. 2, 1846. ³⁰ *Ibid.*, Jan. 3, 1847.

³¹ *Ibid.*, Aug. 29, 1848. ³² *Ibid.*, Sept. 2, 1848. ³³ *Ibid.*, Jan. 10, 1849.

³⁴ *Pilot*, Jan. 27, 1849; *Catholic Observer*, Jan. 25, 1849.

Elroy, who was the pastor, after the arrival of the Sisters began to plan to expand and improve the school. This raised a serious difficulty. Mother Étienne was unable to supply the Sisters that he required. She, therefore, decided that it would be best to withdraw the members of her order who were in Boston, and on August 7, 1849, they left for other missions.³⁵

The Bishop then wrote to Bishop Purcell, of Cincinnati, and asked him to persuade the Sisters of Notre Dame to take charge of the school. They agreed to send three Sisters. Evidently Bishop Fitzpatrick concluded that it would be more convenient if the Diocese had a group of Notre Dame Sisters who would be independent of Cincinnati. If a mother-house was established in Boston, he probably reasoned that more young ladies would be inclined to join than if they had to journey to Cincinnati. This would mean that Sisters would be available for a rapid expansion of the school system. It is not certain whether or not he expressed this plan to the Superior of the house at Cincinnati, Sister Louise. But if he did not do so, Father McElroy did.³⁶ It almost stopped this second beginning of St. Mary's School. The Superior refused to send any Sisters under such a condition. Boston would have to be content for some years, she wrote, to depend on Cincinnati.³⁷ Bishop Fitzpatrick consented to this.

Three Sisters of Notre Dame left Cincinnati on November 5, 1849, and after six days' journey arrived in Boston. They opened their school on November 15, 1849, with over one hundred pupils under their charge.³⁸

A few months after this, Father McElroy decided that a night school was also needed in Boston. Many children in those days went to work at an early age and lost practically all opportunity for an education. The exact date of the opening cannot be discovered, but probably it was early in January, 1850. By Febru-

³⁵ Mother Étienne to Bishop Fitzpatrick, July 23, 1849 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*); *Memoranda*, Aug. 7, 1849.

³⁶ Sister Helen Louise, *Sister Louise* (Washington, D.C., 1931), pp. 125-126; Sister Mary Agnes McCann, *The History of Mother Seton's Daughters* (New York, 1917), II, 74.

³⁷ *Sister Louise*, *loc. cit.* ³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

ary one hundred and twenty girls were enrolled and almost three hundred more were seeking admission.³⁹

In March, 1852, Bishop Fitzpatrick suggested to Father McElroy that he buy from the City of Boston either the Otis Grammar School or the Endicott School.⁴⁰ The former was purchased, and it will be recalled that Father McElroy tried to use it as the first step in the plan that was to lead to Boston College. When he failed to accomplish this, St. Mary's School was transferred from Stillman Street to this building on Lancaster Street. The Sisters began to use the new schoolhouse in September, 1853.⁴¹ In 1858 a new convent was erected beside this school, giving the Sisters more comfortable quarters. This valuable addition was entirely due to the courageous zeal and enterprise of the Superior, Sister Mary Alphonsus. The burden of paying for the entire project, including the price of the land, was assumed by her. It cost over sixteen thousand dollars, yet, when the Sisters took up their residence, it had almost entirely been paid. Bishop Fitzpatrick deeply appreciated the abilities of this Sister Superior, and described her as an "excellent and pious religious," who was also a "woman of rare capacity."⁴²

At the time that the new St. Mary's School was opened, another step in the development of educational activities was taken. This consisted in establishing in the parish what was called a "Select School," that is, an academy for girls. Here those who could afford to pay for it were taught the higher branches of education.⁴³ Many of the schools later opened under the supervision of the Sisters of Notre Dame had these academies attached to them.

Although the new convent on Lancaster Street was far superior to anything the Sisters had lived in up to that time in Boston, certain disadvantages did appear as the years went by. Finally, it became clear that another location would be of great advantage in safeguarding the health of the Sisters. Through the agency of Dr. Henry I. Bowditch, a lot of land in the Back

³⁹ Father McElroy, S.J., to Bishop Purcell, Feb. 21, 1850 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

⁴⁰ *Memoranda*, March 6, 1852. ⁴¹ *Pilot*, July 30, 1853.

⁴² *Memoranda*, Jan. 8, 1859. ⁴³ *Pilot*, April 16, 1853; July 26, 1858.

Bay on the corner of Berkeley Street and St. James Avenue was purchased. Here a building containing an academy and a convent was erected. The Sisters took up residence in June, 1864. Each day during the school year they journeyed to the North End to conduct their classes. The academy, a continuation of the one established at St. Mary's, was opened on September 12, 1864.⁴⁴

Meanwhile, there had been opened in Roxbury what has proved to be the first boarding-school for girls in the Boston Diocese that has survived until the present day. On what was then known as the Dedham Turnpike (Washington Street) the Bishop purchased four acres of land for eighteen thousand dollars. It was his intention to establish a mother-house for the Sisters of Notre Dame.⁴⁵ This, of course, was a step towards realizing the design he had conceived years ago to make the Sisters of Notre Dame in the Boston Diocese independent of Cincinnati. The negotiations for the property were completed early in June, and on June 13, 1853, Sister Louise, the Superior of the Notre Dame Sisters, came to Boston from Cincinnati, and, together with the Superior of St. Mary's School, visited the site. Here in a conference with the Bishop and Patrick Keeley, the architect, plans for the new convent were agreed upon.⁴⁶ But the proposal to establish a mother-house was not accomplished at this time. Just what happened is not quite clear. At the Roxbury meeting it was agreed that Keeley should furnish the plans for the building within two weeks. There is no evidence in the Diocesan Archives to show that these were ever completed. Nor does it appear that any building activities were started. The first definite clue is in the *Memoranda* for November 9, 1853. Here it is stated that a letter had been received from the Superior General of the Sisters of Notre Dame in Namur, Belgium, announcing that the Sisters promised for the new convent in Roxbury could not leave Belgium until spring. Evidently, however, they did not

⁴⁴ *The American Foundation of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur* (Philadelphia, 1928), pp. 203-204.

⁴⁵ *Memoranda*, June 1, 1853. ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, June 13, 1853.

come, and, instead, early in 1854, Sisters of Notre Dame from Cincinnati arrived and opened a boarding-school for girls.

The first location of this academy was in a small house situated on the grounds. At the same time that the Sisters began this work, they also took charge of a free school for the girls of St. Joseph's parish. This was conducted in the basement of the church,⁴⁷ until Father O'Beirne built a schoolhouse on the grounds of the Academy in 1855.⁴⁸ In August, 1856, one of the schoolrooms in this free school was converted into a chapel to accommodate the community, which could no longer find sufficient room in the tiny chapel in the academy building.⁴⁹

The Sisters did not expect to use this chapel for any length of time, for the Bishop was then negotiating for a new building to house the academy. The plans of Patrick Keeley were approved by him on September 7, 1856,⁵⁰ and Keeley was instructed to draw up contracts for the west wing. This was completed in the spring of 1859, and was blessed by Bishop Fitzpatrick on May 1st.⁵¹ The property was conveyed to the Sisters of Notre Dame by the Bishop on November 21, 1865.⁵²

In March, 1859, the Eliot School dispute took place, and the Jesuits decided that it was imperative to begin a school for boys immediately. Early in 1859 Father Wiget, S.J., had opened a Latin School on Hanover Street under the auspices of the Men's Sodality, to prepare boys for the priesthood. During the Eliot School controversy some scholars tried to transfer to this school.⁵³ The Latin School probably was closed in the Fall of 1859, and St. Mary's Free School for Boys was established. Father Wiget, S.J., appealed to the Sodality, and this organization agreed to assume the burden of supporting the school.⁵⁴ Tammany Hall, on the corner of Travers and Portland Streets, was hired and classes were opened in September.⁵⁵ This was to be only temporary, for at the same time a lot of land next to St. Mary's Church was bought, and St. Mary's

⁴⁷ *Catholic Almanac*, 1855. ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 1856. ⁴⁹ *Memoranda*, Aug. 15, 1856.

⁵⁰ *Memoranda*, Sept. 8, 1856. ⁵¹ *Ibid.*, May 1, 1857. ⁵² *Ibid.*, Nov. 21, 1865.

⁵³ *Boston Journal*, March 17, 1859; *Pilot*, Aug. 27, 1859; *Memoranda*, Mar. 10, 1859.

⁵⁴ *Woodstock Letters*, VI (1877), pp. 45, 46. ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, XXVII (1898), pp. 87-99.

Institute was erected on it. The boys' school was transferred thither in 1862.⁵⁶

Although a parochial school is said to have been established in Holy Trinity parish, Boston, in 1844, it would seem that it was not in existence in 1847.⁵⁷ The first evidence of the existence of a school in any of the sources for this period shows that the Sisters of Notre Dame opened one for girls in September, 1859.⁵⁸ The *Catholic Almanac* for 1861 mentions for the first time a school for boys. This probably means that the school was opened in 1860. It was conducted by lay teachers.⁵⁹

In East Boston, Father Fitton — an enthusiast for Catholic schools — remodeled the old Church of St. Nicholas into a school in 1859.⁶⁰ It had the beautiful title of Our Lady of the Isle.⁶¹ It was conducted by the Sisters of Notre Dame. This order also took charge of a school which was opened in September, 1860, in SS. Peter and Paul's parish, South Boston.⁶² In 1863 these Sisters began teaching the children of the Gate of Heaven Church, South Boston.⁶³ Their school was located in the basement of the church.

An interesting and little known attempt to found an academy for girls was that made by Father Haskins. In 1854 he opened what he called a *Young Ladies' School* at 40 Harrison Avenue. He himself was the principal.⁶⁴ There is no evidence to show how long this school remained in existence.

A final word in regard to the Catholic schools located in Boston must concern that one conducted at the Cathedral by

⁵⁶ *Woodstock Letters*, XXVII (1898), pp. 87-99.

⁵⁷ The *Catholic Observer* for July 3, 1847, carried an advertisement announcing that Holy Trinity parish would conduct a fair, the proceeds of which would be used to open a Catholic school. Father McElroy, S.J., writing to Bishop Purcell in 1848, stated that there was only one Catholic school in Boston — that conducted by the Sisters of Charity. (Father McElroy, S.J., to Bishop Purcell, Jan. 14, 1848, in *Notre Dame Arch.*) Bishop Fitzpatrick, in describing plans to make a start towards founding Boston College by converting the priest's living quarters in the rear of Holy Trinity Church into a boys' school, makes no mention of any boys' school being in existence at that time (*Memoranda*, July 5, 1850).

⁵⁸ *The American Foundations of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur*, p. 255.

⁵⁹ *Catholic Almanac*, 1864.

⁶⁰ *Memoranda*, Sept. 5, 1860.

⁶¹ *Catholic Almanac*, 1861.

⁶² *Memoranda*, loc. cit.

⁶³ *Annals of St. Agnes' Convent, South Boston*.

⁶⁴ *Commonwealth*, Aug. 23, 1854.

the Sisters of Charity ever since their coming to Boston in 1832. This school was named after St. Aloysius.⁶⁵ Since it was not mentioned in any of the Directories after 1859, it seems fair to conclude that it was closed in 1858, when the Sisters moved to their new home on Camden Street in the South End.

In tracing the development of schools outside Boston, it will be found that some very promising foundations, as well as some dismal failures, were made. At Burlington, Vermont, Father O'Callaghan erected a school on Cherry Street in 1847.⁶⁶ For several years Catholic lay teachers conducted classes in this building. Later it was remodeled into a residence for Bishop de Goës Briand.⁶⁷ At Springfield, Massachusetts, Father Doherty opened a school in the vestry of the church in 1850. Laymen were in charge of it.⁶⁸

The year 1852 saw the opening of schools in Lowell, Salem, and Lawrence. It was the liberality of Father Timothy O'Brien that made a school of the Sisters of Notre Dame possible in Lowell.⁶⁹ "His zeal for religion . . . induced him to spend in this pious undertaking all his savings during his life as a priest."⁷⁰ This foundation developed into a boarding-academy and a free school. At Lawrence on the day that Bishop Fitzpatrick blessed the new St. Mary's Church, Father O'Donnell, the pastor, showed the Bishop two large schoolhouses that had just been erected.⁷¹ These buildings were not finished, but the Bishop said that they could be "used with comfort." Perhaps this meant that classes were being held in them at this time. The Sisters of Notre Dame were sent to Lawrence to teach in St. Mary's school in 1859.⁷² Up to that time the school had been conducted by laymen.⁷³ There is a tradition that Father Ffrench started a school for the boys of the Immaculate Conception parish when he went to Lawrence in 1846.⁷⁴ The first official mention of this school is to be found in the *Catholic*

⁶⁵ *Catholic Almanac*, 1855.

⁶⁶ *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, 471. ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Pilot*, May 18, 1850. ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, Oct. 2, 1852. ⁷⁰ *Memoranda*, Sept. 20, 1852.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, Dec. 5, 1852. ⁷² *Sister Helen Louise*, p. 151.

⁷³ *The American Foundations of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur*, p. 293.

⁷⁴ *The Catholic Church in New England*, I, 288.

Almanac for 1861. By 1865, St. Mary's had an evening school for girls.⁷⁵ Father Shahan opened St. James' parochial school for boys in Salem in 1852. This school was conducted by a layman.⁷⁶

Father Haskins had for a time a "Select School for Boys" presided over by a layman in Roxbury.⁷⁷ This seems to have been started in 1864, but probably did not last very long. Father Boyce, of St. John's, Worcester, attempted to begin a Catholic educational program in 1854. He organized what was known as the Catholic Institute, and furnished two classrooms in the building occupied by this organization.⁷⁸ The classes were taught by two laymen. Later Father Boyce turned the school over to the Worcester school authorities. They were to support the school, but Father Boyce was to have the right to select the teachers. This attempt to give the Catholics some voice in the public school education of their children ended in a dismal failure because of the incompetency of the teachers.⁷⁹ The Sisters of Mercy, of St. Anne's Church, Worcester, besides conducting their hospital, also had a night school. This was probably opened in 1865.⁸⁰

In 1855 the Sisters of Notre Dame expanded their educational work in the Diocese by taking charge of a new school for the girls of St. Mary's (Immaculate Conception) parish in Salem.⁸¹ Some years later (1864), Father Shahan bought and converted Nonantum Hall into a school for girls. The Sisters of Notre Dame extended their labors by assuming the care of this new addition to St. James' parish.⁸² Both these parishes also had schools for boys presided over by laymen. That of St. James' has already been mentioned; the one in St. Mary's parish was opened in 1860.⁸³

In various places in this account of the development of paro-

⁷⁵ *Catholic Almanac*, 1865.

⁷⁶ Most Reverend Louis S. Walsh, *Origin of the Catholic Church in Salem*, p. 103.

⁷⁷ *Pilot*, Jan. 2, 1864. ⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, Jan. 21, 1854. ⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, Sept. 9, 1865.

⁸⁰ *Catholic Almanac*, 1866. ⁸¹ Sister Helen Louise, *Sister Louise*, p. 150.

⁸² *The American Foundations of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur*, p. 422.

⁸³ *Catholic Almanac*, 1861.

chial schools, mention has been made of the employment of lay teachers. Schools such as these were organized in an attempt to fill the pressing need for a Catholic educational system. There were several reasons why it was necessary to use teachers who were not religious. One was that the various orders of Sisters who were then engaged in teaching could not answer all the calls that came to them from various dioceses. Another was the fact that parishes could not yet afford to supply even the simple living quarters and meagre support that the Sisters required. And, finally, it will be noted that most of these lay schools were for boys. This was due to the fact that the Sisters of Notre Dame, who were carrying the burden of these Boston pioneering efforts, were prohibited by their rule from teaching older boys.

In addition to the lay schools already mentioned, there were several others. Father Doherty, of Springfield, established one in the vestry of the church early in 1850.⁸⁴ Father O'Cavanagh had a school of this type in Pittsfield. Neither of these was successful, as indeed was the case with most of the lay schools. There was another at Haverhill, established about 1859.⁸⁵ This particular school attracts attention, because of a letter written to *The Pilot* in 1861 by the principal. From this communication one receives the impression that a number of lay schools were opened throughout the Diocese in 1860. Evidently these institutions felt the pressure of the Civil War, and were not going to be resumed in September, 1861, because of lack of funds. The master of the Haverhill school, Francis J. Nicholls, appealed for support, so that they might survive the crisis.⁸⁶

As this period in the history of the Boston Diocese drew to a close, three academies, nine schools for girls, and four schools for boys were to be included amongst its assets. Four thousand, nine hundred and forty-one children were attending these educational institutions. Of these, 207 were pupils in the academies, 3,532 girls were students in the free schools, and 1,203

⁸⁴ *Pilot*, May 18, 1850.

⁸⁵ *Sacred Heart Review*, April 13, 1889.

⁸⁶ *Pilot*, Aug. 31, 1861.

boys attended the schools established for them.⁸⁷ This is only an approximate estimate as far as the number of pupils is concerned, since the schools conducted by laymen were not listed in the report in the *Catholic Almanac* from which these figures were taken. In this educational work Bishop Fitzpatrick took a most active part. Indeed, as the number of schools increased, he began to perform the duties of a supervisor. There are frequent references in his *Memoranda* to visits paid to educational institutions. These were not a mere matter of form. He followed with close attention the recitations of the pupils and frequently recorded his approval or dissatisfaction. Nor were the colleges neglected. Throughout the years of his episcopate, Holy Cross College was frequently visited by him. He went there to find rest from the busy life in Boston. And he always was present when there was an entertainment or "Exhibition." His great foundation, Boston College, was, of course, constantly in his mind. Unfortunately, it was completed just at the time when his health began to fail. This forced him to give less time to this fulfillment of a lifelong ambition than he would have if circumstances had been different. Yet in the midst of his sufferings there was the consolation of knowing that he had achieved success and had given to Boston Catholics a college that would as the years went by secure for them the cultural advantages that their Yankee neighbors enjoyed.

⁸⁷ *Catholic Almanac*, 1866.

CHAPTER XI

DIOCESAN CHARITABLE AND WELFARE ACTIVITIES

I

THE GREAT MIGRATION from Ireland not only obliged the Diocese of Boston, as we have seen, to multiply churches and priests as never before, but raised for both State and Church the problem of providing relief in the shape of shelter, clothes, food, and medicine for the large number of newcomers who arrived in a sad state of illness or destitution. No long treatment can be given here of what was done by the State for those immigrants who needed various types of assistance. In a few words, it can be said that the first rush of immigrants caught civil organizations unprepared. An honest effort was made to meet the exigencies of the situation, but a great amount of mismanagement, waste, inefficiency, and abuse arose from ignorance and inexperience. Two other factors also marred civil charitable work. One was caused by the expense. Each year the cost of maintenance increased, much to the dismay of the taxpayers. This meant that the matter got into politics, where for years it was used as one of the standard pieces of equipment by political parties to secure votes. The other factor was religious prejudice. These days, of course, were saturated with antipathy to Catholicism, and it was inevitable that it should enter into the institutional system.

In general, this institutional anti-Catholicism manifested itself in the policy of allowing Protestants the widest latitude possible in the conduct of religious services, while Catholics were placed under the severest limitations.¹ Now the injustice of this is clear when it is considered that in most institutions throughout the State at least one half of the inmates were Cath-

¹ For examples see *Catholic Observer*, May 3, 1849; *Pilot*, Jan. 10, 1852, Jan. 1, 1853.

olic. Out of this system came at least several incidents which reveal the wrongs that could arise.

One of these took place at the Fitchburg Almshouse in December, 1846. Father Thomas R. McNulty, while answering a sick call in that locality, learned that a Catholic was seriously ill in the Almshouse. The situation was a ticklish one, since the Superintendent had boasted that no Catholic priest would ever enter the doors of his establishment. However, Father McNulty managed to get to the man's bedside without revealing who he was. But when he asked for privacy so as to give the Sacraments, the Superintendent then knew that a priest had entered his establishment. There was a scene. The Superintendent began to bluster about, shouting, "I'll allow no paddy superstitions to go on in a house under my control." To which the priest replied that he would not permit a bigot to stop him from fulfilling his duties. The Superintendent then threatened to use physical violence. But Father McNulty was not to be scared off, and his opponent finally left the room.²

This was a serious situation from the Catholic point of view, since it was an attempt to deprive a dying Catholic of the last rites of his Church. But it was slight compared to the tragic state of affairs, affecting the spiritual welfare of hundreds, that developed in Boston. It began, according to Bishop Fitzpatrick, with the conversion of Captain Daniel Chandler, Superintendent of the House of Industry.³ Captain Chandler was deeply interested in the Catholic Faith, and had made a thorough study of it. During that period, when ship fever victims filled his institution, the Captain labored incessantly to relieve them. He finally contracted the disease himself. Realizing that he was dying, he asked to have Father Fitzsimmons, of SS. Peter and Paul's Church, South Boston, called. His family failed to do this. Finally, he contrived to send his request to the priest by a Catholic who was working around the place. Father Fitzsimmons came and was conducted to Chandler's room. Here the relatives tried to persuade the pastor that

² *Memoranda*, Dec. 29, 1846.

³ *Ibid.*, June 14, 1847.

Chandler was mentally deranged. But the Captain overheard them and declared, "I am not out of my head; but I do not wish to go to hell; and only the priest with the baptism and the Sacraments can save me." His wife then suggested a minister. But the Captain refused, saying, "No, that man has told me there is no obligation to return ill-gotten goods." That put an end to objections. Father Fitzsimmons was left to give him such instructions as were necessary for his entrance into the Church.⁴

Up to this time no real obstacle had ever been placed in the way of a priest visiting the House of Industry. He did have to go to the Overseers of the Poor for a permit to visit a specific person, but it was always granted. But on Monday, June 14, 1847, two days after Father Fitzsimmons visited Captain Chandler, when Father Fitzsimmons sought a permit in order to respond to a call from the institution, he was refused. No reason was given, except that the officer who granted permits did not wish him to have one. At the same time Father McCallion, of East Boston, was denied a permit to visit the patients at Deer Island. It was very evident that a policy of excluding priests from city institutions had suddenly been adopted. The Bishop's opinion was that the Overseers of the Poor were enraged by Captain Chandler's conversion. This was their method of retaliation.⁵

The Bishop protested to Mayor Quincy. The latter declared that he had no power in the matter. Regulations concerning permits to enter the hospitals at South Boston and Deer Island were entirely in the hands of a Committee of Aldermen.⁶ He did, however, bring the matter before the Committee, and they gave their permission for a priest to visit Deer Island twice a week. It should be remembered that this was one of the periods when Deer Island was crowded with sick and dying immigrants. This new policy meant that anyone who needed the Last Sacraments on those days when the priest could not come would just have to die without them! That is what actually happened.⁷

⁴ *Memoranda, loc. cit.*; *Catholic Observer*, June 9, July 24, 1847.

⁵ *Memoranda, loc. cit.* ⁶ *Ibid.*, June 15, 1847.

⁷ *Ibid.*, June 24, 1847.

No wonder the Bishop exclaimed, "This is religious liberty!"⁸ As for the South Boston institution, nothing was done to adjust matters there. Father Fitzsimmons was not called to this place for two weeks, despite the fact that it was crowded with Catholics sick with ship fever. This was due either to neglect or refusal of the officers.⁹ Once more the Bishop had to appeal to the Mayor.¹⁰ Six days went by, the Bishop received no answer. No priest was summoned. Catholics died without the Sacraments.¹¹ In desperation the Bishop went to Simmonds, the principal Overseer of the Poor. He would not give a general permit to enter the institution, but did promise to make sure that a priest was sent for when needed. This was scant consolation for the Bishop, who observed:

Very little dependence can be placed on this promise. But there is no remedy in our power. It is an act of religious oppression sanctioned by authority and the poor are prisoners deprived of a right which even criminals are allowed, that of providing for their salvation.¹²

For years the admission of a priest to Boston institutions was a bitterly contested point. In 1853, when Benjamin Seaver was elected Mayor, his opponents proclaimed that since the Irish elected him they would now demand the privilege of having a priest visit the Deer Island and South Boston asylums as often as desired. In fact, *The Traveller* charged that the Catholic clergy told their people from the altar that a deputation of priests was going to call on Seaver, and tell him that since the Irish put him into office he would have to reciprocate and grant their wishes concerning asylums.¹³ Even as late as 1861, Catholic priests were still excluded from public institutions.¹⁴

II

Hundreds of Catholic children in Boston needed help. Some had lost their parents in the ship fever or cholera epidemics,

⁸ *Ibid.*, June 16, 1847.

⁹ *Ibid.*, June 26, 1847.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*, July 2, 1847.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Pilot*, Jan. 1, 1853.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, July 20, 1861.

others were neglected or abandoned, some others were stubborn or wayward, or had fallen afoul of the law. The Bishop's concern for these youngsters was increased because of a vigorous attempt on the part of certain non-Catholic societies to win them away from the Faith. In most cases the motive was the quite prevalent belief that Protestantism was the soul of democracy. Catholicism was its enemy and destroyer. If democracy was to be saved from the Irish Catholic flood, the Catholics would have to be converted to Protestantism. The way to do this was by converting the children. One report of the Boston City Missionary Society declared that money spent in educating the children of foreign (Irish) parents was well expended, since it would win them away from the influence of the priests.¹⁵ To accomplish this, various stratagems were used. Children were enticed into Protestant Sunday schools by bribes of clothing.¹⁶ *The Pilot* charged that children were stolen from their parents.¹⁷ Protestant missionaries urged them to leave their homes and enter Protestant institutions.¹⁸ Some societies found that by bringing aid to parents who were dying, it was often possible to get control of the children.¹⁹ Other societies, such as the Children's Mission to the Children of the Destitute, gathered the Catholic children and sent them to the West, where they were placed in non-Catholic homes.²⁰ Hundreds of children were brought before the courts each year and were ordered to be sent to the West or to distant parts of New England, where they lost the Faith. In this case, however, there was often no malice on the part of the judges or officials involved. They simply wanted to help the children.²¹

Sunday schools were considered to be an especially effective method of winning over the young. The Unitarian churches were very favorable to it. They had as their agent the Chil-

¹⁵ *Annual Report of the Boston City Missionary Society, 1848*, p. 12.

¹⁶ *Pilot*, Oct. 13, 1849; Jan. 19, June 22, 1850; Oct. 23, 1852.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Oct. 26, 1850.

¹⁸ Father George F. Haskins, *Report, Historical, Statistical, and Financial of the House of the Angel Guardian. From the beginning in 1851 to October 1864* (Boston, 1864), pp. 6-7.

¹⁹ *Pilot*, Oct. 26, 1850. ²⁰ Father Haskins, *Report, 1851-1864*, p. 5.

²¹ *Circular of the Home for Destitute Catholic Children; Pilot*, Oct. 8, 1864.

dren's Mission to the Children of the Destitute. This society at one time managed to gather about one hundred and fifty youngsters into a Sabbath school, which was located in the ward room of District 9. When the Catholic adults of the district discovered this, they decided to end it. One Sunday morning they stopped and questioned every child. All who admitted they were Catholics were sent home. The Sabbath school soon closed because of lack of patronage.²² In other cases the Catholics were not so fortunate. When priests and Catholic Sunday school teachers tried to get the children away from these Sabbath schools, they were driven off by police officers hired for this purpose.²³

It would be a serious breach of justice to close this section without saying that there were many Protestants who did not approve these acts and policies. They were not disturbed when they saw the Irish Catholic immigrants streaming from the ships. They welcomed them, glad that they had escaped from a government that had misruled them for centuries. They rejoiced when they saw a plentiful supply of labor coming to build up the economic life of the country. They were not alarmed when they saw the Church of Rome expand. These were the people whose spirit was that of the Rev. Frederick D. Huntington, of the South Congregational Church, who, in preaching to the Society for the Prevention of Pauperism, pleaded for the Irish, "famished fugitives from misgovernment," and exclaimed:

Most of these foreigners are Roman Catholics. In the name of the religion of Him who rebuked the Pharisee's bigotry for refusing to help a Samaritan, let us resolve to purge away once and forever, all sectarian bias and preference in our charities.²⁴

III

By 1850 the new quarters provided for St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum by Bishop Fenwick the year before he died had been

²² *First Annual Report of the Children's Mission to the Children of the Destitute* (Boston, 1849), pp. 6-7.

²³ Father Haskins, *Report, 1851-1864*, p. 5.

²⁴ *Journal of the Society for the Prevention of Pauperism, February, 1851*, I, no. II, p. 33.

outgrown. The building was not designed to accommodate more than fifty orphans, yet the Sisters had contrived to crowd almost one hundred within its walls.²⁵ Such conditions were not to be borne with too long. In 1850 some consideration was given to a proposal to enlarge the Purchase Street property,²⁶ but the commercial development of the city in that section probably caused the Bishop to feel that a new location would be preferable. In 1855 a site on the corner of Camden Street and Shawmut Avenue was secured. On this one of the finest and most beautiful orphanages in the State was built. It truly was a remarkable achievement when one considers that, at a time when the Diocese had very little financial means, the Sisters and the Bishop dared to assume a project that cost \$120,000. Equipped to house six hundred orphans, the new St. Vincent's was opened in April, 1858.²⁷

No description of this orphanage would be complete without some tribute being paid to the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul. The development of the orphanage from the small edifice on Purchase Street to the ample building on Camden Street within fifteen years was chiefly their accomplishment. With the small income they derived from the board of the orphans, collections, and the products of their skill in sewing, they fed and clothed their orphans. That this was no easy task is evidenced by the orphanage's reports. Frequently they were reaching down to the very bottom of their treasury; in fact, in 1861 they were so poor that they had to appeal for gifts of food. Over and above these funds, an income was obtained from a fair which was held each year. This was the source from which money was gathered to pay for new buildings and improvements. The Sisters assumed the greatest part of the burden of this Orphans' Fair, although they were always aided by a committee of laymen.

Carrying on the orphanage was not the only work of the Sisters. For some years they conducted a day-school for girls. They also found the time to go to the homes of the poor and

²⁵*Pilot*, Oct. 26, 1850; *ibid.*, Oct. 27, 1855.

²⁶*Ibid.*, Dec. 14, 1850.

²⁷*Ibid.*, May 1, 1858.

the sick, bringing relief and comfort. In the cholera epidemic of 1849, Sister Ann Alexis, the Superior, and her companion were to be seen daily in the hospital on Fort Hill bringing medicine and food to the victims, preparing the dying for the Last Sacraments.²⁸

Sister Ann Alexis was the outstanding member of the community. Little notice is given to her now when Boston charities of any kind are discussed, yet she was the principal charitable worker of her time. Boston knew her as a devoted laborer for the poor, who drew her inspiration, not from humanitarianism, but from Christ. The Bishop considered her to be almost indispensable. The Catholic population loved her. Protestants knew her worth, and many of them were always ready to aid her. Henry Cabot Lodge's father, John Ellerton Lodge, was a great admirer of her, and was especially generous to her orphanage.²⁹ Of her, one paper said that she was

. . . a most remarkable lady whose reputation as an efficient and untiring worker in the field of charity is wide spread, and rests on the foundations of a work, which has been equalled but by few, even of those who devoted their lives to kindred deeds of charity.³⁰

Dr. Henry I. Bowditch, who gave freely of his skill to the orphanage for many years, wrote to a committee that presented him with a painting of Sister Ann Alexis after her death:

Sister Ann has always been one of my beau ideals of what an able, excellent Christian woman can do and become in this world. When I have thought of her lifelong self-sacrifice, and yet apparently no self-sacrifice to her; I have, I think for the time being, sincerely determined to do rightly, because of her beautiful example. When inclined to murmur and to be morose at the events of this life, I had only to bring to my mind her devotion to the poor, when instantly all my complaints would vanish. I have seen less of her these latter years,

²⁸ *The Lives of Our Deceased Sisters*, p. 7. A volume privately printed and circulated amongst the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul.

²⁹ Lodge, *Early Memories*, p. 56.

³⁰ *The Lives of Our Deceased Sisters*, p. 5.

because of my distance from the Asylum, and I feared that the Institution would suffer if I retained my place, but I always tried to see her as often as I could for the very reason, that I always gained more than I was able to bestow. Be assured that no one outside the immediate circle of her friends mourns her loss more than I, and I sincerely hope some time again to meet her.³¹

Amongst the priests of the Diocese, Father George Haskins was outstanding in the field of charitable work. He was the founder of the House of the Angel Guardian, an institution for boys that has produced great results. He had an interest in this type of work because of his early experience in Boston institutions, and it was only natural that he should be eager to engage in it again as a priest. This desire was intensified by his work as pastor of St. John's Church, in the North End of Boston. Here he frequently saw instances of neglected boys who needed help. Father Haskins had three purposes in founding the House of the Angel Guardian. He wanted to aid the homeless Catholic boys of the city, he desired to stop the constant complaint that the support of poor Irish Catholic children was an enormous civic burden,³² and he wished to check proselytism. He believed that he could start his work in a small way by persuading the city authorities to allow certain boys, who were inmates of the Boylston School in South Boston and the House of Industry at Deer Island, to be transferred to his House. As time went by he planned to take more boys, until finally he had relieved the City of the support of most of these youths. The authorities, however, refused his request. Father Haskins thought that their refusal was based on prejudice, but they claimed they were complying with the wishes of the boys' parents or guardians.³³ The priest determined to go on with his work, and he spread the news throughout the city that he was ready to accept any needy boy. He soon had crowds begging for admission. One of the first boys to come revealed the

³¹ *The Lives of Our Deceased Sisters*, p. 5. This letter is dated April 2, 1875.

³² *Pilot*, June 26, 1852.

³³ *Ibid.*, Aug. 2, 1851.

pitiable condition in which many lads lived, in his conversation with Father Haskins, who asked him:

"What do you want, my boy?"

"A place to live in, sir."

"Where do you live now?"

"In the street, sir."

"Have you no parents?"

"No, sir."

"No relations?"

"No, sir."

"What do you work at?"

"Nothing, sir."

"Where do you obtain food?"

"I take a loaf of bread from some shop door and a can of milk from another, and then I go down to the wharf and share it with other boys."

"Where do you sleep?"

"Sometimes I sleep on the steps of the market, and sometimes when it's cold, I get into a carriage or a cart."

"Well, come in. You are just the boy we want."³⁴

This boy's story sounds like something out of Dickens, yet there were many Boston boys whose lives were similar to it. Earning a few pennies by selling papers or shining shoes, these lads spent most of their time idling about the streets or wharves. Some were neglected, or had been abandoned, by their parents, others had lost their fathers or mothers, or both, in the ship fever or cholera epidemics. This was the group that Father Haskins wanted in his House. But he soon found that he was not going to get "the vagrants and the idlers, the homeless, the news vendors and shiners," for they for the most part were not willing to submit to discipline. On the other hand, he did find that many of the applications made to him were for boys who were not orphans, or who had guardians who could well afford to care for them. These were boys who needed training in good behavior and obedience. The result was that the House of the

³⁴ *Pilot*, June 26, 1852.

Angel Guardian became, as the years went by, not so much an orphanage as a reformatory.³⁵

Besides orphans and boys placed there by their parents or guardians, the House also sheltered an interesting group called Externs. These were boys who had jobs in the city, but had no homes. Father Haskins took them in, fed them, lodged them, and they in return paid him a modest fee. He also supervised their expenses and savings, with the result that when these boys left the House they had a good sum of money in their pockets.³⁶

It was Father Haskins' policy not to allow the boys to remain in the House for too great a length of time. He believed that in most cases a stay of a few months was all that was necessary, while the most difficult boy was not to remain more than two years. During the boys' period of residency they were disciplined to such a degree as was required in order to correct their bad habits, but in no case was physical force used. Deprivation of their privileges was found to be sufficient punishment. Father Haskins' greatest means to bring about an improvement in the character of his lads was through religious instruction and reception of the Sacraments, and especially the latter, for he believed that the grace of God in a boy's soul was the most efficient instrument for reforming defects in character. When a boy's period of training was finished and the Director decided he was ready to leave, a job was found for him in the city or country, or he was apprenticed to some Catholic master to learn a trade.³⁷

Financial support for this institution came from many sources. When it was first started, Father Haskins carried the entire burden himself,³⁸ and during all his years of association with the House he gave every penny he had to it.³⁹ Another source was the fees paid to the institution by parents, guardians, priests, or parishes. When the Director found that he was getting boys whose support could be paid for by someone, he

³⁵ Father Haskins, *Report, 1851-1854*, pp. 7, 30.

³⁶ *Pilot*, March 6, 1858.

³⁷ *Memoranda*, Nov. 23, 1851; *Pilot*, June 26, 1852, Jan. 26, 1861, Nov. 26, 1864.

³⁸ *Pilot*, Sept. 27, 1851.

³⁹ Father Haskins, *Report, 1851-1864*, p. 64.

consulted the Bishop, who advised him to charge one dollar a week, as did St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum. The wisdom of this advice was testified to by Father Haskins, who stated, "From this time the Institution may be said to have commenced its growth and its usefulness."⁴⁰ Finally, the House of the Angel Guardian received a good income from the concerts which the boys gave at various times during the year. These became a very famous feature of the institution, and the boys traveled all over New England, giving their entertainment in the principal towns and cities.⁴¹

The first location of the House of the Angel Guardian was in a house belonging to the St. John's Church property on Moon Street Court. Cornelius Murphy and his wife, the occupants, were the supervisors.⁴² It was opened on June 1, 1851. In 1852 the institution was moved to North Square, where Father Haskins had bought three houses. One of these he converted to the use of the House. The others were rented and the income was used to support the work.⁴³ The number of inmates increased very rapidly, and by July, 1853, had risen to one hundred. Finding that the North Square location was not at all suitable, the Director purchased a site in East Boston on Bennington Street. Here he planned to build a structure costing one hundred thousand dollars. For some reason, however, this project was dropped, and in 1856 the property of the Norfolk Lead Company on Vernon Street, Roxbury, was secured. The cornerstone of the new edifice was laid on May 15, 1859,⁴⁴ and it was occupied by December, 1860.⁴⁵

The background history of the Home for Destitute Catholic Children is most interesting. During the years that comprise the Fitzpatrick period there was a growing belief that State institutions did not furnish the proper type of care for destitute children. Many interested people held that there should be a return to the old system of placing children in homes where

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁴¹ The archives of the House of the Angel Guardian contains a large book of clippings giving notices and programs of these concerts.

⁴² Father Haskins, *Report, 1851-1864*, pp. 7, 30; *Memoranda*, Nov. 23, 1851.

⁴³ *Pilot*, May 15, 1852. ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, May 21, 1859. ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, Jan. 26, 1861.

they would receive the benefit of domestic influences. Both denominational and non-denominational charitable organizations began to work along this line. Courts also consigned hundreds of children each year to homes in the West or in various parts of New England. The unfortunate part of this, from the Church's point of view, was that a large proportion of these children were Catholic, and this policy of home placement meant that many were lost to the Faith. It would not be just to accuse either the civil tribunals or many members of charitable societies of doing this merely for the sake of turning them from Catholicism, for in many cases the only motive was an honest desire to aid needy boys and girls. But there was a definite loss to the Faith, and something had to be done.⁴⁶ Neither St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum nor the House of the Angel Guardian met the requirements, since the former was organized to board and care for female orphan children and those of limited means, while the House of the Angel Guardian had assumed to some extent the character of a reformatory. What was needed was an association to care for destitute children, who would be gathered not only from the homes of the poor, but also from almshouses and poorhouses throughout the State. This association would strive to stop crime amongst children by taking them out of situations where they would be tempted to break the law. The children would be kept in the home of the society only for a short time, and then would be returned to the parents, when it was advisable, or placed in suitable homes.⁴⁷

To carry out this plan an organization was already at hand. On November 25, 1850, a Protestant, Samuel Eliot, later head of the Normal School, started a Ragged School in a house on Channing Street. Schools such as these, commonly known as Charity Schools, were institutions supported by private philanthropists for the education of poor children. The plan is definitely English in its origin, and one of its great promoters

⁴⁶ *Pilot*, Oct. 8, 1864.

⁴⁷ *Fourth Annual Report of the Home for the Protection of Destitute Roman Catholic Children in Boston from January 1, 1867, to January 1, 1868*, pp. 7-9. These Reports will be found in the Boston Public Library.

was Miss Mary Carpenter, noted English social worker. It may be that Eliot learned of it from Dr. Joseph Tuckerman, who was a friend of Miss Carpenter. Eliot carried on the school for six years. During this period the majority of the pupils were undoubtedly Catholics, and it appears that the best of relations existed between the Master and the Boston Church authorities. Samuel Eliot gave up the school in July, 1856, and it was reopened on September 1st of that year. A circular, issued by Father John J. Williams,⁴⁸ indicates that the Diocese now had some voice in its management, if it did not have complete control. Probably it received its support mainly from Protestants. In the *Catholic Almanac* for 1864 it is listed as one of the charitable institutions of the Diocese. A system of child-placement was organized, and within four months, out of more than 108 children who were admitted, 28 were placed in homes.⁴⁹ The new school was located at 9 High Street, and was known as the Eliot Charity School.⁵⁰ In seven years four hundred children were received and cared for.⁵¹ In 1864 the Association for the Protection of Destitute Roman Catholic Children in Boston was organized, and took over the Eliot Charity School, changing its name to the Home for Destitute Catholic Children. Since the object was to save children, the Superintendent was sent to the abodes of the poor and into the courts and prisons to rescue them. From January 1, 1865, to January 1, 1866, 212 children were provided for.⁵² A great deal of the institution's success was due to the support of Protestants.⁵³

Although the administrative personnel of the institution was at first made up of laymen, the plans of the Association called for the supervision of the Home by religious. This was fulfilled on January 17, 1866, when several Sisters of Charity arrived to take charge of the institution.

Like all the other charitable institutions of the Diocese, this

⁴⁸ John J. Williams, *To the Patrons of the Charity School in Channing Street* Jan. 1, 1857 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* ⁵⁰ *Ninth Annual Report*, Jan. 12, 1872, to Jan. 8, 1873, p. 3.

⁵¹ *Pilot*, Oct. 8, 1864.

⁵² *Annual Report*, Jan. 1, 1865, to Jan. 1, 1866, pp. 7-8.

⁵³ *Memoranda*, Oct. 25, 1865.

one soon outgrew its quarters and a more ample building had to be provided. The money for this was collected during the last days of Bishop Fitzpatrick. The new location of the Home was on Common Street. It was opened in December, 1866.⁵⁴

To Andrew Carney must be paid the tribute of being the greatest philanthropist the Boston Diocese has ever had amongst its laymen. Having acquired a large fortune, he devoted much of it to the relief of his countrymen, and the development of the Church. During his life he gave over two hundred thousand dollars to Catholic charities. Boston College and the Immaculate Conception Church are heavily indebted to him; in fact, his close friend, Father McElroy, S.J., said that without him it would have been impossible to sustain the college and church.⁵⁵ The Daughters of Charity of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul also found him an ample benefactor. St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum was repeatedly assisted by him. In 1863 he bought the Howe Estate in South Boston and gave it to Sister Ann Alexis for a hospital. Known as the Carney Hospital, it was endowed by its founder to the extent of almost seventy thousand dollars.⁵⁶ This hospital was opened in July, 1863, with a staff of two Sisters and two laymen.⁵⁷

Although the Carney Hospital was the first institution of its kind to be established in the Diocese, an attempt had been made some years before to acquire the Boston Lying-in Hospital. Dr. Nathan Hayward and Dr. Horatio Storer, both Protestants, proposed to Bishop Fitzpatrick in October, 1856, that an establishment under Catholic auspices should be opened in Boston for the care of the sick. Both of these doctors had studied in Europe, and had been much impressed by the vast hospitals which were maintained there by religious orders. They were especially enthusiastic about the work of the Sisters of Charity.⁵⁸ The Bishop was quite eager to have this hospital, and so the two doctors made an immediate start by opening what they called the Eustis Street Dispensary in Dr. Hayward's

⁵⁴ *Ninth Annual Report*, Jan. 12, 1872, to Jan. 8, 1873, pp. 3-4.

⁵⁵ *Pilot*, April 16, 1864.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Memoranda*, July 10, 1863.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, Nov. 17, 1856.

office on Eustis Street, Roxbury. Six Catholics were appointed to act as directors and to collect the funds necessary to maintain this dispensary.

Dr. Storer was attached to the staff of the Lying-in Hospital, and on learning that it was in severe financial difficulties, he conceived the idea of persuading the trustees to give it to the directors of the dispensary under a perpetual lease. One ward was to be reserved for the original purpose of the hospital.⁵⁹ He presented the plan to the hospital trustees, who at first appeared to be favorable to it. But at the very end of the negotiations, when they learned who was coöperating with Dr. Storer, the trustees were very much disconcerted. They admitted that the proposal was excellent, but they lacked the courage to turn the hospital over to Catholics, knowing full well that the weight of public opinion would be against them. Neither the Bishop nor the committee was surprised at this; in fact, they had warned Dr. Storer that this would be the result. The doctor, however, was very much astonished, for he could not believe that there was such opposition to the Church.⁶⁰

No further information concerning the Eustis Street Dispensary is available. Perhaps the failure to obtain the hospital was so discouraging that the whole affair was dropped.⁶¹

A further development of Catholic charitable activity amongst the sick was almost realized in 1863. In July of that year Theodore Metcalf attempted to have the Boston City Hospital placed under the charge of the Sisters of Charity. The Sisters were, however, at this time too much engaged in various hospitals caring for soldiers who had been wounded in the Civil War, and it was impossible to secure a sufficient number for Boston.⁶²

Another plan for a hospital that never materialized was that of Father Hamilton, of St. Francis de Sales' Church in Charlestown. For years he had had the ambition to build a church in honor of St. Francis, and when this was finally accomplished, he

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* ⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, Nov. 30, 1856.

⁶¹ The dispensary is described in *The Pilot*, Nov. 8, 1856.

⁶² *Memoranda*, July 10, 1863.

began to dream of the day when he would erect a hospital. That day, however, never came, for it was all that he could do to carry the debts of his church.⁶³

Outside the Boston area the only institution founded during these years was at Worcester. Father Power, of St. Ann's Church, opened a hospital in 1864. The Sisters of Mercy were given charge of it. It was the first public hospital in that city to be erected for the benefit of the poor.⁶⁴

In 1859, Mrs. Dwight and several other ladies proposed that a House of the Good Shepherd should be opened in the Diocese. The Bishop was sure that sufficient funds for such an institution could not be raised at that time, but in order to satisfy these ladies he asked Mother Ignatius Ward to come to Boston and study the matter. Mother Ignatius arrived on June 17, 1859, and had two interviews with the Bishop. They concluded that the object was wholly unattainable at that time. It would require an extensive group of buildings, which the Diocese absolutely could not afford.⁶⁵

At the close of Bishop Fitzpatrick's episcopate, the Diocese of Boston had three asylums for children and two hospitals. In comparison with many other dioceses this was not a very glorious record. In the South and in the West there were many large and flourishing dioceses that had been established long after that of Boston, yet they could show a far more impressive list of charitable institutions. Thus, on first consideration, it would seem that Boston had failed. However, several things must be considered before such a conclusion is drawn. In the first place, there was the question of money. Boston had no great treasury to draw from. By far the great majority of its people were working people who depended on a weekly wage for their living. The salaries they received for working in mills and foundries and on the railroads were exceedingly small. It was no easy matter for a Catholic in those days to secure a position that gave him a decent living. Too often the very busi-

⁶³ *Father Hamilton's Diary*, Jan. 29, 1863 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁶⁴ *History of the Catholic Church in New England*, II, 848.

⁶⁵ *Memoranda*, June 17, 22, 1859.

nesses that would give him this were those on whose doors hung the sign, "No Irish need apply." Now these Catholics wanted churches; not only wanted them, they had to have them. That took money, and it had to come from their slender resources. When that was given, little remained for anything else. Moreover, large sums of money were constantly being sent back to Ireland by them to help relatives or friends. That also lowered the possibility of securing donations for hospitals, homes, and asylums. In short, there just was not enough money to build the many churches of the period, and at the same time undertake a large building program of any other nature. Moreover, it was very difficult to support the few institutions that the Diocese did possess. St. Vincent's had a large debt, the House of the Angel Guardian also, and more projects would only have added to the already tremendous burden. Bishop Fitzpatrick was not a man who would thoughtlessly create financial responsibilities. He was a conservative man. Andrew Carney called him a shrewd financier. Before he began extending charity to anyone, he wanted to be certain that he could observe the law of justice and pay his creditors.

His policy is well illustrated by the fate of St. Mary's Orphan Asylum. Here was an institution whose building was all paid for by December, 1847, yet the Asylum was closed early in 1848. Why? Because the directors insisted that no charge should be made for the care of the boys. That meant that St. Mary's would have to be supported by collections. But St. Mary's parish alone, it was found by experience, could never raise sufficient funds to do this. That made it necessary to go out and make appeals in other parishes. However, St. Mary's Asylum was only a parochial affair, intended for the children of the parish. Hence, although the Diocese in general would have to support it, the benefit of the institution would be enjoyed only by a small part of the Diocese. This forced the Bishop to take a bold step. Disregarding the emphatic wishes of the directors and parishioners, he ordered St. Mary's Orphan Asylum closed and converted the building into a school. In this way, although this Diocese lost a badly needed institution,

yet a sound financial policy was respected and the Bishop avoided the embarrassment of having a bankrupt institution on his hands in a few years.⁶⁶

It should also be remembered that two of the diocesan institutions were very large, and could accommodate a great number of children. St. Vincent's could house six hundred, while five hundred boys could be gathered into the House of the Angel Guardian. This meant that while there were fewer institutions in the Boston Diocese than elsewhere, yet if the number who were actually within these institutions is used as a basis of comparison, Boston was not too badly off. If the list of asylums for children in various dioceses as given in the *Catholic Almanac* for 1866 is consulted, it will be found that Boston was by no means lagging behind. In fact, the Diocese was outstripped only by New York, St. Louis, and New Orleans.⁶⁷

IV

For many years the Young Catholic Friends' Society was the most important of all diocesan charitable societies. Its principal object was to conduct Sunday schools, but the poverty of many of the children in these schools made it imperative to undertake extensive relief work.⁶⁸ And, moreover, during at least one period of the Fitzpatrick episcopate the Society also engaged in child-placement.⁶⁹

The Young Catholic Friends' Society was not confined to Boston. There was scarcely a parish throughout the Diocese that did not have such an organization. The very rapidity with which they appeared in various localities testifies to the importance of the work that was accomplished.

⁶⁶ *Memoranda*, May 24, 1848; Directors of St. Mary's Orphan Asylum to Bishop Fitzpatrick, June, 1848 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

⁶⁷ The lists in the *Catholic Almanac* in a few cases do not give the number of inmates in some institutions in some dioceses; hence my statement that Boston was fourth cannot be absolutely accurate. I am certain, however, that even with a complete listing in every case, Boston's status would not be greatly altered. I did not include infant asylums.

⁶⁸ See for example *The Pilot*, April 17, 1850; Oct. 23, 1852; May 24, 1856; *Catholic Observer*, Oct. 30, 1847.

⁶⁹ *Pilot*, Feb. 19, 1848.

Unfortunately, however, the Boston organization finally fell into disrepute. Politicians were the cause. They joined the society, and then sought prominence in it so that they might become known to the people. At last their activities split the society into hostile factions. Elections to office were bitterly contested, and finally two sets of officers were elected. The Bishop tried to restore peace and order, but failed, and so in August, 1860, he withdrew his official sanction from the Boston group.

Boston, however, was not left too long without a charitable society. In 1861, Father John Williams became acquainted with the work of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in New York. He was deeply impressed by its religious spirit and accomplishments and decided that Boston should have a similar organization. As a result the first official conference was established in St. James' parish in 1861.

V

The last thing to be discussed in this chapter is the efforts that were made by the Church to teach temperance in the use of intoxicating liquor. There were a number of non-Catholic temperance organizations at this time, and they all were involved in controversies as to what policy should be adopted. Some believed that the cause would be more easily advanced through moral persuasion, while others sought for legal measures against those who were engaged in manufacturing or selling intoxicating liquors. Southern advocates of temperance complained that the movement was falling into the hands of the Abolitionists. Church groups accused the Sons of Temperance and the Washington Temperance Society of atheism. But despite these arguments the temperance question was very much alive and its advocates were eagerly seizing any opportunity to advance their cause. Hence, when immigrants and travelers brought to the United States the news that a priest, Father Theobald Mathew, was carrying on a great temperance work in Ireland, many interested persons, both Protestant and Catholic, became eager to bring him to this country.

Father Mathew's visit to Boston was not fully approved by Bishop Fitzpatrick. The Bishop favored the temperance cause, but objected to the fact that Father Mathew's coming was controlled to a great extent by the civil authorities and "by those ultra-reformers and pseudo-philanthropists who are public men and leaders more by their own ostentation and impudence than by any virtue or merit."⁷⁰ The priest's entrance into the city was a triumph. Brought into Boston from Roxbury in an open barouche, he was greeted by a great throng of people, who packed the sidewalks along Washington Street, hung from the windows, and swarmed over the rooftops. At the Adams House Governor Briggs was waiting for him and, after greetings were exchanged, the Governor and priest, Dr. John C. Warren, who had read an address of welcome to him when he crossed the boundary line from Roxbury to Boston at the "Neck," and Deacon Grant and Dennis W. O'Brien, President of St. Mary's Mutual Benevolent Catholic Total Abstinence Society, went outside and stood upon a platform while a procession passed by.⁷¹ In the afternoon there was a monster mass meeting on Boston Common that was truly somewhat startling in the make-up of the gentlemen who stood on the platform. There was Dennis O'Brien, whose Society was the largest in Boston,⁷² Governor Briggs, Mayor Bigelow, and several ministers, amongst whom, of all men, was the fanatical Lyman Beecher. The gathering seems to have been a means of introducing the guest to the people, for little was done in the way of administering pledges.⁷³ Bishop Fitzpatrick described the meeting with great disapproval when he wrote:

This afternoon a mass meeting was held on the common. The Governor then received Fr. Mathew, and the latter addressed the multitude. The platform was also covered by sec-

⁷⁰ *Memoranda*, July 24, 1849; John Gilmary Shea, *A History of the Catholic Church*, IV, 187.

⁷¹ *Boston Daily Traveller*, July 23, 1849; *Boston Evening Transcript*, July 24, 1849; *Catholic Observer*, July 26, 1849; *Pilot*, July 28, 1849.

⁷² John Allen Krout, *The Origins of Prohibition* (New York, 1925), p. 199.

⁷³ *Boston Evening Transcript*, July 25, 1849; *Pilot*, July 28, 1849.

tarian fanaticks, Calvinistic preachers and deacons and other such who also made their speeches. The appearance of fellowship between a Catholic priest and such men can hardly be without evil results.⁷⁴

The greatest event took place the next day in Faneuil Hall. It was rather a singular meeting, with the Bishop's "sectarian fanaticks" encircling the platform and Josiah Quincy pointing out the shock that Puritan ancestors would have experienced at the sight of their descendants associating with a Catholic priest. The speakers, too, were careful to say that Father Mathew came not for the sake of the Yankees, but for the benefit of his compatriots — a statement that was rebuked by Captain William Baxter, who said that he hoped "that our own people as well as the Irish, the rich as well as the poor, would come forward and take the pledge of total abstinence."⁷⁵

On Friday morning, July 27, 1849, the Apostle of Temperance began in earnest the real business of his visit and commenced to administer the pledge to the citizens of Boston in Faneuil Hall. Avoiding anything that would tend to separate him from his audience, he invariably would perch himself on a chair in the midst of each new group that came to him and address to them a very practical little speech, warning of the evil effects of drink. He also urged his countrymen to get away from that curse of the Irish immigrant of almost invariably settling in the cities, and to move on out into the farming districts, where agriculture would give them a far happier life than anything they could hope to secure in the crowded and unhealthy urban centres.⁷⁶ Time after time he spoke as new crowds pressed around him, until by seven-thirty in the evening not less than one thousand had knelt before him.⁷⁷ Saturday was an even more strenuous day, and he is said to have pledged three thousand.⁷⁸

Father Mathew's journeys through American cities seem to have followed a more or less set routine in that during the first

⁷⁴ *Memoranda, loc. cit.* ⁷⁵ *Boston Daily Traveller*, July 27, 1849.

⁷⁶ *Boston Daily Traveller*, July 27, 1849. ⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ *Pilot*, Aug. 4, 1849.

few days of his stay he was under the care of the civil temperance societies and was then turned over to the Catholics. Following this arrangement, Father Mathew left his lodgings at the Adams House on July 27th and took up his residence with the Bishop; and from then on he worked almost exclusively in Catholic circles and under Catholic auspices. And he labored heroically for his cause. At the Cathedral the crowds were so great that he had to go out onto the steps in the afternoon to meet those who came to give their promise. Over fifty-five hundred had knelt before him by Monday night and by Wednesday, after he had visited St. John's and St. Vincent's Churches, about fifteen thousand had signed abstinence cards.⁷⁹ His greatest Boston meeting took place on September 2nd, when the Melodeon was packed with a tremendous crowd of his followers, many of whom at his invitation became members of the American Temperance Society.⁸⁰ From Boston he journeyed to East Boston, South Boston, Cambridge, Lawrence, Lowell, Salem, Quincy, Canton, Fall River, New Bedford, Worcester, and in Maine to Portland, Bangor, Dover, Portsmouth, and the Indian settlements.⁸¹

Father Mathew's sojourn in Boston was marred by some unpleasantness, such as the very strong emphasis that was placed on the fact that he came to Boston for the benefit of the Irish, and not the Yankees. There was frequent mention by public officials that he was acceptable as a temperance advocate despite his Catholicity. Some criticized him because of a chance remark that he wished all his countrymen back in Ireland might come to the United States to enjoy its blessings — a statement that threw many a Yankee into a panic at the thought of a still further increase in the number of Irish immigrants. Most serious of all, however, was the crafty attempt of William Lloyd Garrison to involve him in the Abolition question.

On August 23, 1833, the long struggle that had been carried on in England by the Abolitionists, led by William Wilberforce, came to a conclusion when a bill was carried through

⁷⁹ *Ibid.* ⁸⁰ *Pilot*, Sept. 8, 1849.

⁸¹ Cf. *ibid.*, Sept. 8, 15, 29, Oct. 13, 1849.

Parliament by Edward Stanley, Colonial Secretary, for the emancipation of slaves in the English colonies. It became a milestone in the cause of freedom, and amongst Abolitionists in the United States the freeing of the slaves in the British West Indies was a symbol of what they sought in this country. Seeking to commemorate and emphasize this event, Garrison and his followers planned to hold a meeting at Worcester, on August 3, 1849, and decided that Father Mathew should be present. Dr. Henry I. Bowditch and the Pontiff of Abolitionism called on the priest at the Adams House, and after a few preliminary sparrings Garrison handed Father Mathew an invitation to attend the Worcester gathering. Father Mathew was greatly embarrassed, for he intended to visit the South, and he certainly would not have been welcome there if he identified himself with Northern Abolitionists. He tried to avoid an outright refusal (which would have been equally injurious to his cause in many circles in the North) by pleading that the temperance cause occupied all his time. But Garrison, not easily shaken off when in full cry of his crusade, refused to accept this excuse. Breaking out into a favorite theme of his, he charged Catholic priests and laymen with being favorable to slavery and attempted to persuade the priest to admonish the Irish to throw the weight of their political influence against slavery. And then he confronted Father Mathew with the fact that he had at one time signed an "Address of Daniel O'Connell's to the Irish people in the United States," urging them to support the Abolition movement. This ended the meeting, but Garrison, angered by his failure to win over the Apostle of Temperance, took the matter to the pages of *The Liberator*. Here, for several issues, he described Father Mathew as a man without honor, who sacrificed his principles for expediency.⁸²

⁸² Krout, *Origins of Prohibition*, pp. 218 *et seq.*; John Francis Maguire, M.P., *Father Mathew* (London, 1863), p. 21; *Catholic Observer*, Aug. 16, 1849; *Pilot*, Aug. 25, 1849.

CHAPTER XII

A CRUSADE AGAINST THE CHURCH

I

THE GROWTH OF THE DIOCESE from year to year was not unnoticed by the anti-Catholic elements. The numerous churches, the appearance of parochial schools, the plan to found Boston College, the demands of the Catholics for the unhampered exercise of their religion, the ever-increasing number of Catholics, all served to revive opposition to the Church.

In February, 1847, a former Trappist monk, who had the sorry distinction of being a colleague of the notorious Father Hogan, was lecturing against the Church in Tremont Temple.¹ Anti-Catholic agitators appeared at Cabotville and Millbury in June, 1847.² Even the Mexican War furnished an opportunity for a display of hostility to the Church. One of the Massachusetts officers, Captain Lincoln, was killed at the battle of Buena Vista. His body was brought to Worcester for burial. It was met at the station by a guard of honor made up of representatives of various groups, amongst whom were the faculty and students of Holy Cross College. Several of the fire companies refused to participate in the funeral procession because of their presence.³

These incidents were, however, of minor importance. Of far more significance were the efforts that were made to win the Irish from the Church and an attempt to incite them to riot.

The endeavor to convert the Irish is an indication of a very sincere belief held by many Protestants that Romanism was not compatible with democracy. Adherents of the Catholic Church could never be assimilated within a democratic way of life.

¹ Anonymous to Bishop Fitzpatrick, Feb. 14, 1847 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

² *Pilot*, June 5, 1847. ³ *Ibid.*, July 31, 1847.

And so many an honest Protestant looked upon the immigrant flood with great misgiving. It was Irish, therefore, Catholic. But Catholicism meant Rome and the Papacy. The Papacy, to the Protestant mind, claimed not merely spiritual but temporal power. That temporal power was inseparably joined to monarchical forms of government. But, in the Protestant concept, such principles were absolutely opposed to democratic beliefs and practices. Therefore, Catholics were fundamentally hostile to democracy. The Protestant mind could not separate spiritual and temporal allegiance. It could not accept the proposition that Catholics could recognize the Pope as their spiritual head and yet never be affected by his temporal sovereignty. A Catholic, according to the Protestants who held this belief, could never give complete political loyalty to the United States; nay, he must even seek to overthrow the Union and bring it under the domination of Rome. But the Catholics were swarming into the country, and, therefore, Protestants must be up and doing. These foreigners had to be won away from the Church. They must be brought into the religion that was the lifeblood and soul of democracy — Protestantism. Then the country would be saved.

The chief promoter of this movement in Boston was the Boston City Missionary Society. The agent of the Evangelical Churches of Boston, and definitely hostile to the Catholic Church, this Society embarked upon an ardent series of operations to save the city from Romanism. The *Annual Reports* are filled with ideas quite characteristic of that section of the population which considered Catholicism to be a distinct threat. One *Report* declared:

This Society is certainly the great instrumentality of these Churches in God's hand for reaching the papal population of this city; a large class amongst us and increasing with surprising rapidity. It is of first importance that we do all in our power not only for our defense against Romanism, but by way of making an aggression on the domains of the Man of Sin.⁴

⁴ *Annual Report of the Boston City Missionary Society, 1846, pp. 7-8.*

In another place in this *Report*:

There is much infidelity amongst us. Here Romanism is strongly entrenched and powerful to operate for our injury. Our first attention at this juncture, should be directed to the religious wants of this city. Let us labor to make this great population right in faith, in Puritan character, in gospel piety.⁵

Founded in 1816, and saved from stagnation and collapse by a legacy of three thousand dollars received in 1840, the Society had embarked, by 1846, on a program aimed at converting the Irish. In a report of 1845, the directors of the Society expressed concern about the increase in the papal population,⁶ and, in 1846, they revealed a plan to meet the danger. Already 417 enthusiasts were in the field, distributing religious tracts amongst the people and attempting to persuade them to attend Protestant services. These activities were of such magnitude as to cause the *Catholic Observer* to print a series of articles on how to meet the approaches of these people, and, as a matter of fact, one of the reasons why this paper was started was to instruct Catholics on this very subject. The tract distributors or colporteurs, as they were called, also acted as recruiting agents for the Sabbath schools and were supposed to try to persuade Catholic children to join them. Other activities included sending lay missionaries about the city to visit, and, if possible, convert, any family which would listen to them. But it is quite evident that the results were not too gratifying, and the directors finally formulated the plan previously mentioned; some of the lay missionaries were released in favor of ministers, and — more important, as they thought — they began to seek “a converted Roman Catholic who will act as a missionary.”⁷ In 1847 they were successful in obtaining an apostate, for a man by the name of O’Brien appeared on the scene in June to commence “his labors among the papal part of our population.”⁸

For a time, Missionary O’Brien turned in glowing reports of

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 8, 9.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

his successes with the Irish. He zealously distributed Bibles, he wrote, amongst these people, and they had shown a commendable eagerness to receive the Book of which the priests deprived them. O'Brien, of course, was repeating the old accusation that the Church refused to allow the people to read the Bible, a statement that was not without its humorous side, since *The Pilot* constantly advertised the sale of Bibles, and even gave them as premiums for a certain number of subscriptions. He also reported that he had conducted weekly prayer meetings, together with a Rev. Mr. Bounce, for the Romanists, and had attempted to teach "those who were ready to be taught out of the Scriptures."⁹

There was no doubt in his mind that he could reach the Roman Catholics and bring grace to them, slaying at the same time

. . . that deep-seated malice infused into them by a crafty priesthood, who laying hold of and taking occasion by the injustice of an oppressive government towards them as a nation have embittered their minds and set in array the worst passions of human depravity, not only against the government and the national religion but against the religion of the Bible.¹⁰

It is evident, however, that O'Brien could offer very little in the way of definite accomplishments. Twenty-one heads of families were reading the Bible, according to him, but only three showed any signs of conversion, and, of these, only one had asked admission to the Congregational Church. He had visited sixty-six families; called on twenty-two people who were sick; attended about one hundred social-religious meetings; and spent part of his time in a Sunday school held on the Mill Dam.¹¹ One gets the distinct impression from his reports of an attempt to inflate minor accomplishments to monumental proportions.

Probably the directors were not any too well pleased with this missionary, who boasted of his achievements, but could point to only one definite conversion; the *Report* for 1849 does not even

⁹ *Ibid.*, 1847, p. 8.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 1848, p. 23.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 23-25.

mention him, while the *Report* for 1850 curtly announced: "Mr. O'Brien's connection with the Board terminated on the first of July. As he left no report we can give no account of his labors."¹² One wonders if honest Irish wrath with this "turncoat" helped him on his way!

The attempt to involve the Irish in a riot was cradled in the desires of unprincipled schemers to revive the Native American Party. By 1847 Native Americanism was at a low point, and those who were interested in the movement were strenuously trying to resuscitate it. Apparently their efforts had little success, and they finally decided on a desperate measure. Experience had taught the leaders that one way of rallying the people was to provoke a fight with the Irish. This had always been a certain method of uniting the unthinking, less intelligent, and ignorant. It was a low and despicable scheme that ignored the destruction of property and injuries, even deaths, that were sure to follow. Provided they gained their ends, the leaders were willing to allow anything to happen.

These plottings reached their climax in June. A number of meetings were held, all of which were a preparation for a grand gathering.¹³ An assembly to discuss plans for this demonstration was held on Boston Common on June 9th. It was a decidedly inflammatory gathering, and several very violent speeches were made. At its close it was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Fort Hill.¹⁴ The malicious intent of the men who had this resolution passed is quite evident. The Fort Hill section of Boston was inhabited chiefly by the Irish. For the Nativists to invade that quarter and hold one of their meetings there meant that they were seeking trouble. Certainly no man or group of men could expect that the insults and jeers that would come from the ranks as the Nativists marched through the streets to the square on Fort Hill, nor the wild harangues that would be given when they had reached it, would fall unnoticed upon the ears of the Irish. In the ordinary

¹² *Ibid.*, 1850, p. 6.

¹³ *Catholic Observer*, July 24, 1847. The statement that the meetings were a preparation for a large assembly is mine.

¹⁴ *Memoranda*, June 11, 1847.

course of events their anger would be aroused, hot words would pass, tempers would flare, a fight would start, and the Nativists, forewarned, would be well protected, the Irish would suffer the injuries. And when it was over, the Nativists could claim that a meeting of Americans had been disrupted by the rowdiness of a group of foreigners. They could pose before the public as the injured champions of freedom and rally their lost followers back to the party.

The leaders laid their plans well. Their followers were to meet in the different ward rooms of the party and march to the Common and then to Fort Hill.¹⁵ The members were to be armed with clubs disguised as walking sticks. The marshals carried batons covered with silk. Actually, these were lengths of iron pipe.¹⁶ And, as a supreme piece of audacity, they so equipped a group of men that they appeared to be one of the militia companies. This gang, armed with rifles and fixed bayonets, was to guard the marchers.¹⁷ The route to be followed also reveals the intentions of the designers. In all cases it was to pass through the streets where the Irish lived. Nor did these men end their preparations here. *The Signal*, newspaper of the Native American Party, was filled day after day with articles calculated to arouse the passions of its readers. Truly, no other conclusion can be drawn but that here was a deliberate project to insult and exasperate the Irish and goad them to violence. Once that had been done, it would be only too easy to turn the well-prepared marchers upon them. And the "native sons" well knew that in a city such as Boston the weight of public opinion would be aroused, not against them, but against the Irish whom they had lured into this outbreak.

But they left one man out of their calculations. This was Bishop Fitzpatrick. He had carefully followed the activities of the Native Americans and understood clearly what they were planning. On June 16th, the day of the grand assembly, he sent the priests of the Cathedral through the streets where his people lived and warned them to stay in their homes and give no notice to the marchers.¹⁸

¹⁵ *Ibid.* ¹⁶ *Catholic Observer*, *loc. cit.*

¹⁷ *Memoranda*, June 27, 1847. ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, June 16, 1847.

The Nativists gathered on the Common. The main body made its way to Fort Hill through Broad and Hamilton Streets, while large groups reached the meeting-place by passing through Oliver and Purchase Streets.¹⁹ Anyone familiar with this section of Boston will easily understand how this division of forces made it possible for each group to cover the others in case of an attack. The marchers jeered and cursed the Irish and the Papists. But not an Irishman was seen on the streets or in the windows. The meeting itself was a farce and a failure. Several speakers were forced to stop by the groans and hisses of sensible Yankees who came to view the proceedings. After twenty minutes of this, the mob became impatient and began to break up. Many of the members, amongst whom were a great number from Charlestown, scoured the streets, lanes, and alleyways, using every stratagem they could devise to provoke the Irish. But the latter obeyed their Bishop. Not one son of Erin could be found.²⁰

The Charlestown group was the most vicious. On their way home they threw stones at St. Mary's Church and at some dwelling-houses. Several panes of glass were broken in the church windows and a baby in one of the dwellings was seriously injured. The City Marshal replaced the glass the next day. "Much regard for glass," wrote the Bishop, "but none for faith and feelings."²¹

II

At this point, then, Nativism had failed, and failed miserably. Non-Catholics were, in general, unwilling to engage in acts of physical violence towards the Church and the Irish. Some were deterred by a respect for property and law, others by a spirit of tolerance. Moreover, there certainly must have been thousands who hesitated because of human respect and shame. Of great importance also was the self-restraint of the Irish, who followed the command of their Bishop and refused to be provoked

¹⁹ *Catholic Observer*, loc. cit.; *Pilot*, June 26, 1847.

²⁰ *Memoranda*, loc. cit.

²¹ *Ibid.*

by their tormentors. Undoubtedly, if they had been so unwise as to have retaliated, a riot would have been started and many Bostonians would have been persuaded that the rapidly increasing number of Irish Catholics was a menace. Bishop Fitzpatrick's command to his people saved the day. It prevented a destructive battle and stopped the reorganization of a group that recognized no limits in its crusade against Catholicism.

But anti-Catholicism was not dead. Many of the opponents of the Church were unwilling to become involved in actual physical violence against her subjects, but they did not hesitate to harass them by more peaceful means. The conflict over the use of the Bible in the schools and the refusal to grant a charter to Holy Cross College are all a part of the general pattern: likewise the difficulty experienced in securing the admission of priests to public institutions. In 1850 trouble arose over Catholic cemeteries. The Boston City Council prohibited burials in the South Boston graveyard. It was necessary to take the case to court in order to receive relief.²² The Mayors of Roxbury and Cambridge petitioned for a law which would give municipal authorities the power to prohibit the enlargement of burial grounds and the opening of new cemeteries. The authorities would also be empowered to close any burial places already in use or allow burials within them only by a special permit. The committee appointed to consider the petition returned a favorable report.²³ The Bishop immediately saw the intention of the petitioners. In those days the principal Catholic cemeteries were located in Roxbury and Cambridge. The authorities of these places had frequently shown a desire to stop Catholic burials, and now they had taken a positive step. To thwart them the Bishop had to appeal to Senator Upham. He succeeded in having the bill recommitted to the committee. Bishop Fitzpatrick then appeared before this group. He explained to the members that Church law required that Catholics should be buried in consecrated ground. Then he accused the petitioners of having only one object in view — to bother

²² *The Memorial History of Boston*, III, 528.

²³ *Memoranda*, Feb. 26, 1850.

and hamper the Catholics.²⁴ The committee thereupon revised the bill in accordance with the Bishop's desires.²⁵ But when it again appeared in the Senate, Senator Joseph Buckingham, a constant enemy of the Church, managed to have it recommitted once more.²⁶ The Committee on Burials then disposed of the affair by reporting that it was unwise to legislate on the petition.²⁷ The Bishop had won a victory for the Church — no small accomplishment in those days.

In 1851 the long controversy over the jail lands began. In this year also the Boston Police Department was shocked by the appointment of an Irish Catholic, Bernard McGinniskin, to the force. A long controversy followed. Poor McGinniskin was tossed into the political arena. He was appointed and discharged, appointed once more, and again discharged. Not yet could a Catholic Irishman aspire to represent the Law in Boston! ²⁸

The year 1852 passed with scarcely a demonstration. At Watertown on March 17th, St. Patrick was hung in effigy. Any Irishman who interfered with this insulting exhibit was threatened with death. The selectmen coöperated with the perpetrators of this outrage by allowing this representation of the beloved Saint to remain for several days.²⁹

The following year saw a revival of more violent opposition to the Church. The famous Hannah Corcoran Riots took place in Charlestown, while in Boston an attempt was made to stage a turbulent protest against Archbishop Gaetano Bedini. St. George's Church in Saxonville was invaded and desecrated by a mob of rowdies.³⁰ The election of Benjamin Seaver as Mayor of Boston brought charges from the Nativists that the priests had secured the Irish vote for him. Seaver in return was to grant the Catholics privileges, such as that of unrestricted access to public institutions. The ire of the Nativists was also aroused by a legislative bill which proposed to settle the dam-

²⁴ *Ibid.*, March 7, 1850. ²⁵ *Ibid.*, March 15, 1850.

²⁶ *Ibid.* ²⁷ *Ibid.*, April 6, 1850.

²⁸ *Boston Evening Transcript*, Oct. 7, Nov. 11, 1851; *Pilot*, Oct. 11, 18, Nov. 22, 29, 1851; Jan. 10, 17, 1852; July 8, 1854.

²⁹ *Pilot*, April 3, 1852.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, June 19, 1897.

ages incurred at the burning of the Charlestown Convent. The failure of the Irish to participate in the reception given to Louis Kossuth, Hungarian revolutionary and opponent of the Church, was caustically commented on by the papers of Boston. It served to increase the conviction that Catholics were reactionary and hostile to democracy. The defeat of the proposed new State Constitution was received with poor grace by its proponents. The Bishop, clergy, and faithful received their share of the blame.

Hannah Corcoran was a young girl, recently arrived from Ireland, whose mother placed her in the service of Marcellus Carpenter, of Charlestown. Hannah was persuaded by him to apostatize. She was rebaptized in the Baptist faith, and later consented to the appointment of Deacon Carter as her guardian. The mother learned of this, took her away from the Carpenter home, and brought her to Father Lyndon, of St. Mary's, Charlestown, for advice. He gave some instructions to Hannah, and advised the mother to send her to some place far enough away to be out of the reach of her seducers. The mother sent her to Philadelphia.

This removal of the Corcoran girl was broadcast about Charlestown by Deacon Carter and his followers, and the ancient, and silly, question was raised as to whether or not she was forcibly held in confinement or had been put to death by the Church authorities. Carter and his associates made every effort to arouse the anger of the people, and many inflammatory articles appeared in the papers. Finally, handbills, containing the following message, were circulated about Charlestown:

SHE MUST BE FOUND

All persons opposed to religious oppression, and the IMPRISONMENT of a Human Being for Opinion's Sake, are requested to meet in Richmond St., Charlestown, on WEDNESDAY EVENING, March 2, at 7 o'clock.

This notice is sufficient evidence that the authors intended to start trouble; St. Mary's Church was situated on Richmond

Street, and, on Wednesday evening, at that season of the year, Lenten services were being held. It was the same old tactic of trying to provoke the Irish in the hope that a riot would result and St. Mary's would be damaged or destroyed.

Alarmed by the threat of another Convent affair, Mayor Frothingham, of Charlestown, asked the girl's mother to produce Hannah in order that the public might be satisfied that she neither had been imprisoned nor was dead. Mrs. Corcoran promised to do this; and at the same time signed a statement testifying that she had not been under compulsion when she removed her daughter from the Carpenter home. This statement, together with one signed by the Mayor to the effect that the mother, or someone representing her, would go to Philadelphia and bring Hannah home, was published in the newspapers.

The Mayor, however, found that this was not enough to stop rumors and threats of violence. After being warned by the City Marshal that the contemplated meeting in Richmond Street was likely to cause a serious riot, he called out the Charlestown City Guard and the Artillery Company; the entire police force was placed on duty, the police of Boston were warned to be ready to go to Charlestown as reinforcements, the Boston militia was ordered to be in readiness to assist, and a force of marines at the Navy Yard was prepared for action. At the same time all valuables were removed from the church and the people were notified not to come for services.

On Wednesday evening, Richmond Street, where it was intersected by Union and Austin Streets, was closed by a rope barricade; behind this a guard of policemen were stationed. Along the sidewalks of Union, Washington, Austin, and Lawrence Streets a cordon of police was drawn up. At the fire houses the members of the various companies awaited action, and a large force of police was stationed in the fire house next to the church.

By eight o'clock a crowd of about two thousand people had gathered. Most of them were not residents of Charlestown, and, as a matter of fact, very few Charlestown people were involved in the riots that occurred. The mob was concentrated at Union and Richmond Streets.

After making sporadic attempts to get by the police, the leaders finally were able to organize a concerted attack; men armed with knives to slash the ropes were placed in the van and a determined push was made to force the barrier. But the police were ready, the attempt failed. Then the ringleaders urged the mob to make another attempt at Austin Street. Here they again bore down upon the rope barricade, and this time were able to tear it down. They also destroyed a small building across the street and part of the fence on the property. The mob was not able to accomplish anything more than this, for, in the meantime, the militia had been sent for; they now entered from either end of Richmond Street, amid shouts and curses, and took up positions facing the mob, the Guards in front of the church, the Artillery Company facing Austin Street. Their presence dampened the enthusiasm of the fanatics, so that by nine-thirty most of them had dispersed. But between two and three hundred of the more determined rioters remained, still anxious to get at the church. About ten o'clock they attempted to divert attention and split up the defending force by sounding the fire alarm. Police were dispatched to investigate. Efforts to get by the line were then renewed and more rioters were attracted back to the scene. This second endeavor must have been more serious than the first, for Mayor Frothingham now sent to Boston for help. Mayor Seaver immediately ordered the waiting militia and police to Charlestown. When the Pulaski Guards, the Boston Light Artillery, the Washington Light Guard, and the City Guards had arrived, a drive was made to clear the streets, a number of the attackers were arrested, and the rest of the gang left the vicinity of St. Mary's.

A deep undercurrent of feeling still continued; it was clear that the mob and their leaders were not satisfied and would seek other opportunities to attack the church. Mayor Frothingham, therefore, obtained authority from Governor Clifford to call out the First and Fourth Regiments, while the police force of Charlestown, two hundred strong, was kept on constant duty.

In the meantime, Hannah Corcoran arrived in Boston on Saturday, March 5th, and immediately placed herself under the

protection of Deacon Carter and the Carpenters. Although it was now evident that no harm had been done to the girl, the fanatics refused to cease their activities, evidently under the inspiration of some leader, or leaders, and Mayor Frothingham was more alarmed than before, lest the church should be destroyed.

On Monday afternoon, March 7th, the tension became so great that the City Guards and the Artillery Company again were placed under arms, the First Regiment was ordered to be ready and was held at Faneuil Hall, the National Lancers and Boston Light Dragoons appeared in the streets about the church on horseback, and the two drawbridges leading from Boston to Charlestown were opened. At eight o'clock, about eight hundred people had assembled before St. Mary's. The rope barricade was up again, and the entire police force, augmented by fifty officers from Boston, was drawn up behind it. The temper of the mob grew more brittle, an encounter seemed imminent. The Infantry Company then mounted the church steps, muskets were loaded, and orders were given to be ready to fire. This display quenched the pugnacious dispositions of the crowd, and by ten-thirty they had drifted away. The Hannah Corcoran riots were at an end.

Four years later, Hannah Corcoran appeared in St. Mary's Church, on Sunday, April 19, 1857, and, before the congregation, made an apology for her part in the affair, announcing, at the same time, her determination to rejoin the Catholic Church.³¹

The roots of the trouble over Archbishop Gaetano Bedini must be traced back to 1849. Pope Pius IX appointed him Governor of Bologna. During the Archbishop's term of office, Father Ugo Bassi, a notorious revolutionary, was executed for violating certain military regulations. The Pope's representa-

³¹ *Memoranda*, March 1, 7, 8, 1853; Thomas F. Caldicott, *Hannah Corcoran: An Authentic Narrative of her Conversion from Romanism; her Abduction from Charlestown, and the Treatment she Received during her Absence* (Boston, 1853); *Boston Daily Bee*, March 3, 4, 7, 8, 1853; *The Commonwealth*, March 3, 4, 1853; *Boston Daily Courier*, March 2, 3, 1853; *Pilot*, March 12, April 9, 16, 1853; April 25, 1857.

tive had no part in this affair, since all actual governing power belonged, not to him, but to the Austrian military authorities.³² In 1853 he was raised to the titular rank of Archbishop of Thebes, and was sent to the United States to investigate various ecclesiastical problems. He was at the same time appointed Nuncio to Brazil.

In this country radical Italians and Germans falsely represented the Archbishop as having been responsible for Bassi's death. Outstanding in spreading this false propaganda was Father Alessandro Gavazzi, a priest who had betrayed his sacred vocation. As a result the Nuncio was insulted and persecuted in almost every city that he visited.

Archbishop Bedini landed in New York, and after a visit to Washington, where he presented a letter from Pope Pius IX to President Pierce, he returned to New York, and then set out on a journey that finally brought him to Boston on September 24, 1853.³³ Bishop Fitzpatrick was not in Boston at the time, but was on his way to Webster to dedicate St. Louis' Church. Fortunately, he stopped at St. John's rectory, in Worcester, where a telegram awaited him announcing the Nuncio's arrival. Returning to Boston, the Bishop found the Nuncio "in a state of terrible trepidation under the fear of conspirators against his life."³⁴

Boston was exceedingly hospitable to Archbishop Bedini, and in a few days he completely recovered from his fright. Apparently every person of distinction in Boston and its vicinity, through the efforts of Bishop Fitzpatrick, met the Nuncio. At Joseph Iasigi's home in Lynn, he came to know Edward Everett and other distinguished guests.³⁵ Dr. Joseph Warren assembled the élite of the city in his honor, as did George W. Gordon.³⁶ John E. Thayer, of Brookline, received him at his home, where he was presented to "twenty-six gentlemen of the highest distinction . . ." The Archbishop declared that this reception

³² Msgr. Peter Guilday, "Gaetano Bedini; An Episode in the life of Archbishop John Hughes," U.S. Cath. Hist. Soc., *Records and Studies*, XXIII (New York, 1933), pp. 101-102.

³³ *Memoranda*, Sept. 24, 1853.

³⁴ Guilday, "Gaetano Bedini," pp. 101-102.

³⁵ *Memoranda*, Oct. 4, 1853.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

was unsurpassed "in princely magnificence" by anything he had ever seen during his career as a diplomat in various European courts.³⁷

Archbishop Bedini left Boston on October 10, 1853,³⁸ his visit unmarred by any fanatical outbursts. Evidently there had been, however, an underground movement against him. In the weeks that followed, the leader or leaders attempted to rally support. This was probably intensified by Father Gavazzi, who was in Boston during November and December.³⁹

In January, 1854, a rumor was circulated declaring that the Nuncio would sail for Europe from Boston. Bigoted Bostonians and radical European revolutionaries laid plans for a demonstration against the Archbishop. The affair was well garnished with all the trappings that such conspirators love. They had secret passwords, clandestine meetings, notices were mysteriously passed about. Every effort was made to gather a huge mob for the occasion.⁴⁰ It was a dismal failure. The Archbishop was supposed to be at the Bishop's residence on February 1st. The rabble gathered in the evening on Boston Common, where they were wildly harangued. Accounts of this demonstration usually state that an effigy of the Archbishop was burned. There is reason to doubt this. Bishop Fitzpatrick inquired into it and felt satisfied that no such insult to the Nuncio took place.⁴¹ After this a group of about two hundred appeared before the Bishop's house at midnight. Many of these were persons who had come out of curiosity. They took no part in the proceedings. The authorities had been made aware of what was planned and a considerable number of policemen were present. The mob loitered around for about three quarters of an hour, displaying their animosity by cursing and shouting for "Butcher Bedini," and then retired.⁴² The German radicals who were involved were much displeased by their want of success and planned to return the next night. But

³⁷ *Ibid.*, Oct. 5, 1853.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, Oct. 10, 1853.

³⁹ *Pilot*, Dec. 10, 1853.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, Feb. 11, 1854; *Memoranda*, Jan. 31, 1854.

⁴¹ *Memoranda*, Feb. 1, 1854; *Pilot*, Feb. 11, 1854.

⁴² *Memoranda*, *loc. cit.*

they could muster no aid and no further disturbances took place.⁴³

Although this affair was a failure, Bishop Fitzpatrick decided not to allow it to pass without notice. And so he wrote a letter to the newspapers in which he declared that nothing had taken place on the evening of February 1st which could be construed as having been prejudicial to the honor of Boston. No blame could be legitimately placed on her citizens. Even the police, with whom he was much displeased because they had made no attempt to arrest the rowdies, were excused.⁴⁴

Here again Bishop Fitzpatrick's judicious handling of the anti-Catholic movement in the Diocese is evident. To have protested against the demonstration would have accomplished little and in many quarters would have only increased fanaticism. But to remind Bostonians, even indirectly, that anti-Catholic riots injured the fair name of Boston was quite another matter. Bostonians loved their city and its reputation. They might engage in bigotry, but when warned that it reflected on the reputation of the Athens of America, many a loyal citizen would waver and stop to reflect before permitting himself to participate in some outrage against the Church. Flattering the mob was more effective than scolding it!

III

The anti-Catholic movement was greatly accelerated during the next few years. The principal events took place in Massachusetts, although demonstrations did occur in New Hampshire and Maine. Various weird and absurd rumors about the Church were circulated. Attacks on Irish settlements occurred. Churches were destroyed. Father John Bapst, S.J., was tarred and feathered at Ellsworth, Maine. A new anti-Catholic party appeared. Bigoted books, newspapers, and magazines had a wide circulation. Intolerance rapidly increased.

What were the causes? Religious antipathy, unfortunately, was one. For years New Englanders had been nourished on a

⁴³ *Ibid.*, *loc. cit.*; Feb. 2, 1854. ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, Feb. 2, 1854; *Pilot*, Feb. 11, 1854.

fare of anti-Popery. The majority had incorrect and distorted ideas about Catholicism. It was conceived to be an idolatrous, immoral, deceiving, lying, anti-democratic religion. Now, as New Englanders looked about them, they saw evidence that Catholicism was greatly increasing. Boston had become its stronghold. The large towns had their Irish sections. And the Irish were taking up residence in the small towns and villages. Many New Englanders must have wondered what would be the situation in a few more years. Within a decade a tremendous change had taken place. The cross over a church building, symbol of Catholicism, had been a rarity except in Boston; now it was a common sight. Moreover, many members of small Catholic settlements that had no church were planning to build one. Here, truly, was reason for dismay. The "Man of Sin" was gathering the land of the Puritans into his grasp. And when he held it firmly, then he would seize and rule it.

Immigration was another cause of this recrudescence of active opposition. In Massachusetts, in the early 1850's, the number of Irish Catholics entering the State reached its peak. To a great extent opposition seems to have grown in direct proportion to this increase. Anti-Catholicism developed slowly from 1847 to 1853. It took some time for the masses to become aware of the significance of the immigration movement. They were also distracted by national issues, such as slavery and the Compromise of 1850. But by 1853 they were fully aware of the situation. In the next year real trouble began. Street preachers and propagandists aroused the Nativists. Forcible expressions of ill-will took place not only in Massachusetts, but also in Maine and New Hampshire. The Know-Nothing Party won its phenomenal success. The immigrant and his Church were attacked on every side.

Several factors were involved in this movement against the immigrant. There was, first of all, the deepseated and traditional antipathy between the Irish and the natives who were of British stock. Secondly, the amount of money that had to be spent for the relief of the distressed increased year by year. Many believed that European nations were deliberately seeking

to undermine the United States by sending their paupers and criminals to this country.⁴⁵ Thus, for example, a Boston committee appointed to investigate the matter reported that they had no complaint about those adopted citizens who through misfortune were compelled to ask for aid. The money to care for them could easily be supplied. But, they protested, Great Britain was thrusting "from her parishes and prisons the poor, the vicious, and degraded." When they arrived in this country, they immediately became objects of charity.⁴⁶ The complaint concerning the burden of relief appropriations was very common. It should, however, be considered with some caution, in so far as the Irish were concerned. Edward Hamilton, a Superintendent of Alien Passengers, was declared by the Massachusetts State Board of Charities to have definitely proved that the head tax collected from the immigrants was amply sufficient to care for all the relief cases arising amongst those who paid it.⁴⁷ Too many loose statements have been made about this matter. Undoubtedly, poor administration of welfare work and wasteful expenditures for institutional buildings, to name a few factors, contributed greatly to the yearly need for an increase in financial appropriations.

Politics also played a part in the renewal of the anti-Catholic movement. Native politicians saw that the foreign vote was steadily growing. In places like Boston the native-born vote increased 14.72 per cent from 1850 to 1855, while that of the foreign-born was augmented 194.64 per cent. In some communities the vote of the foreign-born and their children held the balance of political power. Much to the dismay of the Whigs, the Irish almost always voted the Democratic ticket. There was a perfectly logical reason for this. France declared war against England, Holland, and Spain in February, 1793. The Repub-

⁴⁵ Ray Allen Billington, *The Protestant Crusade, 1800-1860: A Study of the Origins of American Nativism* (New York, 1938), pp. 322 *et seq.*

⁴⁶ Report of a Committee appointed to investigate a petition that the 17th section of the 46th chapter of the Revised Statutes be enforced respecting the return of foreign paupers, June 3, 1852 (Boston City Arch.).

⁴⁷ *Second Annual Report of the Board of State Charities to Which is Added Reports of the Secretary and the General Agent of the Board*, January, 1866 (Boston, 1866), pp. 241-242.

lican Party favored the French. Most Federalists leaned to the English. Naturally the Irish joined the Republicans. In 1798 the Federalists attempted to gag their opponents by the Alien and Sedition Acts. Since these Acts were particularly aimed at foreigners, the Irish were once more driven into the Republican Party. New England Federalists opposed the War of 1812. Irishmen, expressing their dislike for England, were strengthened in their allegiance to the Republicans. Anglophobia also influenced them to support Andrew Jackson in 1828. The contest for the Presidency in 1852 brought Scott and Pierce into the field as rival candidates. Pierce, the Democratic nominee, gained the Irish vote, because his party was the successor of the Republicans and because he had shown himself favorable to the Catholics in New Hampshire State politics. In other words, if the Irish generally cast their lot with the Democratic Party, it was chiefly because of past experience and tradition. But again caution must be exercised in making a judgment about this matter. This favoring of the Democratic Party was expressed more strongly in national than in State politics.

The defeat of the proposed revised Massachusetts Constitution, drawn up by the Constitutional Convention of 1853, also added to the growing opposition. The Irish, in general, voted against it, although some gave it a favorable ballot. *The Pilot* and the clergy were accused of selling the Irish vote to the Whigs. Bishop Fitzpatrick was said to have been consulted by Abbott Lawrence on the problem of defeating the Constitution. Since this story made its first appearance in the *Daily Commonwealth*, a notoriously prejudiced paper, it can be safely rejected as untrue.⁴⁸ Certainly the Bishop would never have allowed himself to become entangled in any political dispute. It would have given a real foundation to the charge that the Church desired to control the State. No man who was doing everything possible to stop the anti-Catholic movement would have allowed his enemies such a fine opportunity to attack him.

The naturalization of foreign-born citizens formed another page in the book of complaint against the Irish. As a matter

⁴⁸ *Pilot*, Dec. 3, 1853.

of fact, Nativists could well be worried, for the editor of *The Pilot* urged the Irish to become citizens so that they might defeat their enemies at the polls. Thus, in one issue he advised this step on the ground that voting power would compel respect,⁴⁹ while in another he declared that the Catholics of Boston were "enlisting a strong force for future demonstrations against Native American principles."⁵⁰

Other causes contributing to the development of anti-Catholicism were a supposed lowering of the wage level, the temperance crusade, the struggle over the use of the Protestant Bible in the schools, and the position taken by the Irish regarding slavery.

At the very beginning of this period, native workmen were complaining that the Irish were depressing the wage level. In 1847 a number of Bostonians petitioned for a meeting of the voters of the city to consider the advisability of prohibiting the authorities from employing immigrants on municipal projects.⁵¹ The refusal of Boston truckmen to participate with the Irish in the parade in honor of President Polk is also an indication of the general attitude. Nor is the fact that outrages against the Irish, involving physical violence apparently originated amongst, and were participated in by, the laboring classes, to be overlooked as a symptom of the times. Actually, however, popular belief was not founded on fact. The average wage received by Massachusetts laborers did not decline.⁵² Moreover, most natives would not accept the types of labor in which the Irish were engaged. For example, work in the mills or on railroad construction was not frequently sought by the natives.

Temperance advocates were much disturbed by the failure of the Maine Law and blamed the Irish for this. Undoubtedly the use of intoxicating liquors was a problem with them. But violations of the law were by no means confined to the immigrants. Even prominent numbers of the Know-Nothing Party

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, Dec. 7, 1850. ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, Nov. 30, 1850.

⁵¹ *Minutes of the Board of Aldermen*, June 1, July 20, Aug. 1, Nov. 15, 1847 (*Boston City Arch.*).

⁵² George H. Haynes, "The Causes of Know-Nothing Success in Massachusetts," *American Historical Review*, III (Oct., 1897), 67-82.

flagrantly flouted this statute. Yet, the Know-Nothings were pledged to correct the evils of immigration. However, full responsibility for infringements was thrown upon the newcomers, and the State Temperance Committee in 1854 declared it would adopt a crusade against Catholicism as part of its policy.⁵³

Full discussion of the slavery issue belongs to another chapter. It is mentioned here because of the very conservative stand taken by *The Pilot* and the Irish. This greatly antagonized the radical anti-slavery forces and they were easily persuaded to join in the discriminatory movement.

The final factor, the use of the Protestant Bible in the schools, touched the deepest emotions and convictions of human beings. It was a clash between religious beliefs that had a background of centuries of strife. Under any circumstances it would have caused contentions until a more tolerant spirit prevailed. Once again, even though it seem repetitious, it must be stated that in Massachusetts there was a strong tradition and belief that Protestantism was the basis of society. Romanism was an exotic organization which could never take a proper place in the State until its exclusiveness and connection with Rome had been given up and it was blended into the community as were the various sects which were all joined together in a common denominator, Protestantism. Amos Lawrence unconsciously expressed this spirit when he penned in his diary in reference to the Wall case:

Trouble with the Catholics in the Boston schools. Father Wiget (an ignorant or bigoted priest, or both) forbids his Sunday School scholars to repeat the 10 commandments in school in the usual form, also the Lord's prayer. This is a difficult subject to deal with, and may be more so hereafter. If Protestant Christianity is to be abandoned in our public educational system, we shall convert the schools of the Puritans into heathen temples, or what is next to that.⁵⁴

⁵³ *Massachusetts Life Boat*, Sept. 19, 1854.

⁵⁴ *Amos Lawrence's Diary*, March 18, 1859 (*Lawrence Papers*, Mass. Hist. Soc. Arch.).

Now Amos Lawrence was by no means unfriendly to the Catholics, yet, when a clash occurred over religious principles, he could not bring himself to recognize that in this democracy Catholics had a right to religious freedom and could not be compelled to act contrary to their conscience. For Lawrence the schools were Protestant. Catholics would have to submit to the system. Unconsciously he expressed the same belief when he described Father Wiget, S.J., as being bigoted. The priest was bigoted because he was contending for the right of his people to exercise fully their religion! Lawrence could not comprehend that he actually was the bigoted person because he favored forcing Catholic children to participate in exercises forbidden by their Church. Certainly Lawrence was right in his belief that religion was needed in the schools. His method of securing this was narrow and undemocratic. Religious training in the schools had to be Protestant. Catholics had to conform. Now Lawrence's state of mind was that of many Massachusetts citizens. Fortunately, he would never follow the road that led to persecution, but there were thousands who would.

IV

In April, 1854, John S. Orr appeared in Boston. In his insane mind he had conceived the idea that he had been given a mission to bring about the destruction of the Catholic Church. Calling himself the Angel Gabriel, Orr customarily costumed himself in a large white garment and carried a trumpet. To those who would listen to him, he proclaimed himself to be the "trumpeter of the approaching King," and "publisher in the open air of the tidings of the glorious Majesty of the approaching Kingdom and its King." Each sentence was punctuated by a blast of his trumpet. He was a mad figure. People laughed at him. But he was dangerous. His attacks on the Church were always accompanied by wild harangues to incite his followers to violence.

Orr made his first public attempt to gather followers on Boston Common on Sunday morning, April 2nd. Apparently he

only succeeded in creating much boisterous hilarity. The police made him desist.⁵⁵ In the afternoon he made the steps of the Custom House his pulpit. A fight took place here, and a boy was arrested.⁵⁶

Rowdy elements became associated with Orr and used him to provoke the Irish. Bishop Fitzpatrick was in Europe at this time, but *The Pilot*, following his policy, entreated the people to stay away from the meetings held by these ruffians.⁵⁷ This was no idle gesture. It was a strong, emphatic appeal which was issued more than once. Irishmen who foolishly became entangled in the strife were roundly condemned. Thus, after one riot, the editor flatly stated that he hoped the authorities would have no mercy on "silly Catholics . . . who will not hear their pastors' " pleas. If they participated in these fracasés, let them be punished.⁵⁸

On May 7th, the "trumpeter" made a desperate effort to provoke a brawl. Early in the morning he went to Medford. The authorities would not allow him to speak and he retired to Chelsea, accompanied by a gang of men.⁵⁹ Here he preached for about an hour and a half on the evils of Popery, causing a slight disturbance. Then he went to East Boston and tried to hold a meeting in Eagle Hall. The police ordered him to leave.⁶⁰ He and his mob retraced their steps to Chelsea. Orr led them to the Irish settlement. He made an inflammatory address.⁶¹ His listeners attacked the "fifty houses" where many of the Irish laborers in the Glendon Rolling Mills lived. The policeman at the scene was wounded. More police were called. The Chelsea Light Artillery was assembled in its armory. The Irish fought back and were finally driven into their houses. Several of them, carrying guns, were arrested. Now the mob moved on to the Catholic Church. They threatened to destroy it. The police intervened, and the Riot Act was read, but the crowd refused to leave. Only one thing could secure this. They must have the cross on the steeple. A boy climbed up and tore

⁵⁵ *Pilot*, April 8, 1854.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, May 6, 1854.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, July 8, 1854.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*; *Daily Commonwealth*, May 8, 1854.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ *Boston Daily Courier*, quoted by *The Pilot*, May 13, 1854.

it down. It was flung into sacrilegious hands and desecrated.⁶² The crowd then dispersed. Orr went back to Boston.

That evening about five hundred Nativists gathered in Maverick Square, East Boston. The cry was raised to pull down St. Nicholas' Church. Policemen and watchmen had to be sent over from the city proper. They broke up the gathering and arrested the ringleader.⁶³

All sorts of wild rumors were to be heard in Boston during the following week. The Catholic churches were to be destroyed. The Irish would be annihilated.⁶⁴ Fearing to risk the danger of a wild riot, the authorities had seven hundred and fifty troops on guard in Boston on Sunday, May 14th.⁶⁵ Perhaps this evidence of an intention of the city authorities to stop any outbreaks discouraged the plotters. Or it may have been that the rumors were unfounded in fact.

Orr transferred his crusade to Worcester on May 18th. Here he was arrested and jailed. A mob demanded his release, but the Mayor ordered them to disperse and called out the City Guards. Many of the rowdies were arrested. Orr was released the next afternoon after having been fined five dollars and costs for disturbing the peace.⁶⁶

On May 28th the Angel Gabriel was in Charlestown. When he returned to Boston, his followers met some Irishmen on Endicott Street. A fight started, but the North Watch soon quelled it.⁶⁷

The Angel Gabriel next went to New York,⁶⁸ but he was back in Massachusetts by the end of June. Lowell was visited by him. No attention was paid to him until he organized a demonstration against the convent of the Sisters of Notre Dame. Then the Irish armed themselves and prepared to resist the fanatics. A disturbance took place on Central Street. Five of Orr's followers were arrested. The Mayor issued a proclama-

⁶² *Ibid.* Some accounts say the police allowed the mob to take the cross in order to persuade them to disperse. *The Pilot* doubted that the police made such a compromise.

⁶³ *Ibid.*; *Daily Commonwealth*, loc. cit.

⁶⁴ *Pilot*, May 20, 1854.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, May 27, 1854.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, June 3, 1854.

⁶⁸ Billington, *The Protestant Crusade*, p. 306.

tion urging the people to stay home. The arrest of the rioters and the Mayor's action seem to have stopped further outbreaks.⁶⁹

The trumpet of destruction was next sounded in Nashua, New Hampshire. The admirers of Orr were persuaded to go to the Acre and attack the homes of the Irish. But the Mayor and the police appeared and the rioters fled.⁷⁰ Then Bath, Maine, heard the call. Orr was very successful this time. The Catholic Church was set on fire and destroyed.⁷¹

When this insane creature returned to Boston, he met his Waterloo. He went to Charlestown on August 20th. Here he was arrested on a warrant issued some weeks before. His followers tried to rescue him while he was being taken to the Cambridge jail. They failed. Then they attempted to free him from the prison by force. Again they failed. Orr was brought before Judge Warren and was charged with (1) disturbing a Methodist meeting-house in Monument Square on August 14th; (2) selling printed handbills on Sunday, May 28th; (3) disturbing the peace on May 28th. He pleaded not guilty and was remanded to jail when he could not furnish bail.⁷² When brought up for trial, he was found guilty, was fined twenty-four dollars, and was ordered to give bonds for three hundred dollars for six months' good behavior.⁷³ This ended his mission in the United States, for after this, no matter where he went, he was not allowed to speak.⁷⁴

V

The next outrage took place in Maine. Father John Bapst, S.J., it will be recalled, went to Ellsworth in January, 1853. Some time after his arrival he began a series of lectures on the Catholic Church. These were very successful and he made a number of converts. This antagonized many of the townspeople.

⁶⁹ *Pilot*, July 1, 1854. ⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, July 8, 1854.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*; *Boston Evening Transcript*, July 8, 1854; *Boston Daily Courier*, July 10, 1854.

⁷² *Pilot*, Aug. 26, 1854. ⁷³ *Ibid.*, Sept. 9, 1854.

⁷⁴ Billington, *The Protestant Crusade*, loc. cit.

ple. He was denounced from the pulpit and in the press. He was warned that he would suffer injury if he did not stop.⁷⁵

In October, 1853, a teacher in one of the schools made a rule that all scholars must read the Protestant Bible or leave school. The School Committee approved this rule. The teacher then expelled two Catholic children. Father Bapst's parishioners presented a petition to the School Committee asking that Catholic children should be allowed to read either their own Bible or none at all. Father Bapst visited the Committee and explained the matter to them. A few favored his case, but had not the courage to express their opinion publicly. The majority refused to listen to the priest.⁷⁶ One of the members declared:

We are determined to protestantize the Catholic children; they shall read the Protestant Bible or be dismissed from the schools; and should we find them loafing around the wharves, we will clap them into jail.⁷⁷

Father Bapst felt that he could not allow the children to submit to a regulation based on such a principle. Another protest was prepared. It was insultingly rejected by the Committee. Two school committeemen then went to one of the schools and expelled all who refused to read the Protestant version.⁷⁸ Father Bapst opened a school for his young parishioners in the old chapel.⁷⁹

It should be understood that there was a large and vicious gang of rowdies in the town of Ellsworth. For a number of years the place had possessed a bad reputation because of the brutality and wantonness of these ruffians. These villains were enraged because the Catholics, led by Father Bapst, had refused to allow their children to submit to the bigotry of the School

⁷⁵ "Father Bapst's Narrative of the Beginnings of the Crisis at Ellsworth" (*Woodstock Letters*, XVIII, 133-136); "The Housekeeper's Account of Events at Ellsworth" (*ibid.*, 136-140).

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*; Father Bapst, S.J., to Father Stonestreet, S.J., Oct., 1853 (*Fordham Arch.*, 221 T 8).

⁷⁷ "Father Bapst's Narrative" (*ibid.*, 133-136).

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*; Father Bapst, S.J., to Father Stonestreet, S.J., Nov. 7, 1853 (*Ibid.*).

⁷⁹ "Father Bapst's Narrative" (*Woodstock Letters*, XVIII, 133-136).

Committee. They were guided and encouraged by the editor of the *Ellsworth Herald*, William H. Chaney. For some time Chaney had used his paper to vilify the Catholics and especially their pastor. Week after week the editor published abuse and insults. He was very successful, so much so that the townspeople signified their approval of his atrocious policy by electing him Town Clerk.⁸⁰ On January 27, 1854, a meeting was held by these low elements in Lord's Hall, for the purpose of forming an anti-Catholic organization. Chaney was the organizer. At a subsequent meeting on February 3rd, the "Cast Iron Band" was established under the leadership of one Hopkins. Chaney, however, was the power behind the scene.⁸¹

Meanwhile, Lawrence Donahoe had withdrawn his daughter from the Ellsworth schools. He gave her private instructions, and sent the State of Maine a bill for her tuition. This caused a very decided increase in anti-Catholic activity. Riots occurred. Chaney's paper cried:

1000 MEN WANTED. To Protestant laborers everywhere, we say, Come to Ellsworth and come quickly! for your services may be needed in more ways than one.⁸²

On June 3rd, Father Bapst's housekeeper learned of a plot to kidnap the priest. Fortunately, Father Bapst, unaware of his danger, had to leave Ellsworth that day to answer a sick call. The mob came in the evening. They demanded the priest. Mary Hennessey, the housekeeper, told them in very vigorous language that he was not at home. The gang satisfied its ugly spirit by breaking almost every window in the rectory. Father Bapst returned on Thursday, June 6th. That night the church was attacked. Colonel Jarvis, a Protestant and a great friend of Father Bapst, succeeded in saving the edifice from complete destruction, but the church windows were shattered by stones.⁸³

⁸⁰ *Bangor Daily Journal*, Oct. 17, 1854 (*American Antiquarian Soc. Arch.*).

⁸¹ Albert Davis, *Religious Troubles of 1854 of Ellsworth, Maine* (1927, manuscript), pp. 8, 9. This is a manuscript carefully and excellently prepared by Mr. Davis. The author lent it to Father Lord, who made it available to me.

⁸² Billington, *The Protestant Crusade*, pp. 293-294.

⁸³ "Housekeeper's Account" (*Woodstock Letters*, loc. cit.).

Reports of the situation in Ellsworth reached the diocesan authorities and they decided that it would be advisable to withdraw Father Bapst from the town.⁸⁴ At that time Bangor needed a pastor and Father Bapst was assigned to that parish. He was ordered not to return to Ellsworth, even for the purpose of saying Mass on Sunday.⁸⁵

On the night of June 13th the Ellsworth ruffians set off a bomb in the school and badly damaged it. The respectable residents of Ellsworth were outraged by this act, and demanded that a town meeting should be called to denounce the perpetrators. But when the assembly was held, the rowdies gained control and turned it into an anti-Catholic demonstration. Great indignation was expressed because Lawrence Donahoe had dared to attempt to free his child from being required to read the Protestant Bible by bringing the matter before the courts. Several resolutions were passed, of which one read:

Whereas, we have good reason to believe that we are indebted to one John Bapst, S.J., Catholic Priest, for the luxury of the present law suit now enjoyed by the school committee of Ellsworth, therefore

Resolved, That should the said Bapst be found again upon Ellsworth soil, we manifest our gratitude for his kindly interference with our fine schools, and attempt to banish the Bible therefrom, by procuring for him, and trying on an entire suit of new clothes such as cannot be found in the shops of any tailor and that when thus apparelled, he be presented with a fine ticket to leave Ellsworth upon the first railroad operation that may go into effect.⁸⁶

Ellsworth incendiaries made an unsuccessful attempt to burn the new church on July 15th.⁸⁷ Several months later they were given the opportunity to crown their infamy. Father Bapst had to go to Cherryfield in October. The journey led through Ells-

⁸⁴ "Father Bapst's Narrative" (*ibid.*, *loc. cit.*). ⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ *Religious Troubles, Ellsworth, Maine*, pp. 7-8, "Narrative of a Protestant Resident of Ellsworth," in the *Portland Argus*, Sept., 1884 (*Woodstock Letters*, XVIII, 304-308). The wording of the resolution in these two sources contains unimportant differences.

⁸⁷ *Pilot*, July 29, 1854.

worth. Very unwisely, but with an understandable zeal for the spiritual welfare of the Ellsworth Catholics, he decided to stop there on Saturday night, hear confessions, and then say Mass in the morning.⁸⁸ Soon after his arrival his enemies learned that he was staying at the Kents' home. They surrounded the house on Saturday night, October 14th. The Kents forced Father Bapst to hide in the cellar. The mob threatened to burn down the house if the priest was not produced. Father Bapst, fearing that the Kents would suffer injury, gave himself up.⁸⁹ One account of this part of the proceedings describes the mob as having searched the residence. They could not find the priest and were about to leave when Sewall Copp, who had built the house, remembered that a trapdoor led to the cellar. This was opened; several men went down, discovered Father Bapst, and brought him out with a rope around his neck.⁹⁰

There is considerable confusion in the accounts of what took place after this. An attempt is made here to reconcile them. Father Bapst was carried off to a spot outside of Ellsworth.⁹¹ Here they robbed him of his money and watch. Then the mob discussed what they would do with their victim.⁹² One narrative, written thirty years later by a Protestant resident of Ellsworth, declares that the priest was actually tied to a tree and preparations were made to burn him. This failed because the supply of matches gave out before the brush piled around the victim could be ignited. Since there was a terrific storm that night, this may well have happened. On the other hand, no contemporary source mentions that the mob wanted to burn Father Bapst at the stake. Father Bapst apparently left no account of the affair. He did send a copy of the *Bangor Daily Journal* describing his experience to Bishop Fitzpatrick. This report, he said, was correct but incomplete.⁹³ This newspaper does not mention the journey to the outskirts of the town. Perhaps this is what happened. These men intended to tar and

⁸⁸ "Housekeeper's Account" (*Woodstock Letters*, *loc. cit.*); "Narrative of a Protestant Resident" (*ibid.*, *loc. cit.*).

⁸⁹ "Narrative of a Protestant Resident" (*ibid.*, *loc. cit.*).

⁹⁰ *Religious Troubles, Ellsworth, Maine*, p. 10.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*; "Narrative of a Protestant Resident" (*Woodstock Letters*, *loc. cit.*).

⁹² *Religious Troubles, Ellsworth, Maine*, *loc. cit.*

⁹³ Father Bapst, S.J., to Bishop Fitzpatrick, Oct. 20, 1854 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

feather Father Bapst and tried to start a fire to heat the tar, but could not find sufficient dry timber. Then they decided to go back to town where proper kindling could be secured. Out of this failure to get a fire going to heat the tar, the story arose that they tried to roast the priest.

At any rate, he was brought back to Ellsworth and taken to a driveway on the property of the Ellsworth Machine Company.⁹⁴ Here a fire was started to prepare the tar. Then Father Bapst was stripped of his clothes, the hot tar was plastered over his body, and the feathers were applied. The men cursed and reviled him. One blasphemer cried, "So they persecuted Jesus of old"; another mockingly urged him to call on the Virgin Mary for help. The foulest billingsgate that could be dredged up from the filthy resources of these men's putrid minds was poured out upon this man who had been taught to love purity.⁹⁵ Then they forced him astride a sharp-edged rail and rode him through the streets for half a mile. They cruelly bounced and jounced the rail to make the journey as excruciating as possible. He was thrown upon Tisdale's wharf totally unconscious from the torment of his sufferings.⁹⁶ During these awful moments some of the mob did want to go to the limit and hang the priest. But the leader managed to dissuade them.⁹⁷

Father Bapst recovered consciousness some time after midnight, wrapped a piece of matting around himself, and staggered away from the wharf. Fortunately, he met a group of armed Catholic men, who were searching for him. They took him to the house of John Lee, where the tar and feathers were removed, and then escorted him back to the Kents' home.⁹⁸

Undaunted by the treatment he had received, Father Bapst said Mass the next morning in the church.⁹⁹ His persecutors threatened to kill him if he did not leave town. Whereupon the Irish armed themselves and made ready to protect their

⁹⁴ *Religious Troubles, Ellsworth, Maine*, p. 11.

⁹⁵ *Bangor Daily Journal*, Oct. 17, 1854 (*American Antiquarian Soc. Arch.*).

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*; *Religious Troubles, Ellsworth, Maine*, *loc. cit.*

⁹⁷ *Bangor Daily Journal*, *loc. cit.*

⁹⁸ *Religious Troubles, Ellsworth, Maine*, *loc. cit.*

⁹⁹ *Bangor Daily Journal*, *loc. cit.*

priest. Then Colonel Jarvis once more came forward. He took Father Bapst to his own home, promising to protect him, even if it meant forfeiting his own life. On Monday morning, Father Bapst again said Mass in the church. He was then taken to Bangor in a carriage.¹⁰⁰

Some time later the Attorney General of the State of Maine, acting on a demand made by some of the citizens of Ellsworth, conducted a grand jury investigation. Although conclusive evidence was available as to who the guilty parties were, no indictments were returned.¹⁰¹

At Bangor, where Father Bapst had become well known and respected, a public meeting was held. The outrage was denounced, and prominent Protestants praised the zeal, patience, and forbearance of the pastor. Father Bapst was presented with a purse of money and a gold watch.¹⁰²

In New England Church history, Father John Bapst, S.J., deserves a prominent place. He was a zealous and saintly priest, who labored incessantly for the salvation of souls. He may have been imprudent. He may have miscalculated the real character of his enemies. His lack of familiarity with English may have been a handicap to him. But these things are as nothing when compared with his magnificent priestly spirit. He was unselfishly willing to follow the Master, no matter where the path might lead. That night in Ellsworth the road of duty, as he conceived it, almost led him to a martyr's grave. He escaped, yet the ravages of that evening of horror did not disappear entirely. They left deep scars in his mind. In the autumn of 1879 his mental faculties began to fail. He knew what was happening, and he had the courage to cry out: "Sume, Domine, et suscipe, accipe meum intellectum."¹⁰³ Ellsworth came and haunted him. Once more he was in the hands of his persecutors. The horror would engulf him. Finally, in terrific mental agony, he would have to seek the protecting presence of one of his fellow Jesuits. Thus, after a lifetime of bodily sacrifices, he finally sacrificed his mind to the cause of Christ.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ "Narrative of a Protestant Resident" (*Woodstock Letters, loc. cit.*).

¹⁰² "Father John Bapst — A Sketch" (*ibid.*, XVIII, 308). ¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, XX, 411.

CHAPTER XIII

KNOW-NOTHINGISM

I

EVIDENCES OF THE GROWING TIDE of anti-Catholicism multiplied during the spring and summer of 1854. The members of the Irish Protestant Mutual Relief Society at their annual dinner on March 17th (the feast day of a Catholic Saint!) raised their glasses approvingly in response to a toast condemning the Pope.¹ The Boston City Guard was still celebrating the Montgomery Guard incident.² At Fitchburg the cross on the Catholic Church was destroyed and the shop of a Catholic bookseller was damaged.³ The use of the Columbian Artillery and Sarsfield Guard to prevent a mob from seizing and freeing Anthony Burns, a fugitive slave, embittered many an anti-slavery man. Bostonians were urged to unite against the Irish by this handbill:

AMERICANS TO THE RESCUE!

AMERICANS! SONS OF THE REVOLUTION!!

A Body of seventy-five Irishmen

known as the

"Columbian Artillery"

have volunteered their services to shoot down the citizens of Boston! and are now under arms to defend Virginia in kidnapping a Citizen of Massachusetts!

Americans! These Irishmen have called us

"Cowards and Sons of Cowards!"

Shall we submit to have our citizens shot down by a set of Vagabond Irishmen? ⁴

At Southbridge the windows of the Catholic Church were broken, and considerable damage was done to the structure.⁵

¹ *Pilot*, April 29, 1854.

² *Ibid.*, Sept. 30, 1854.

³ *Ibid.*, June 3, 1854.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*, July 29, 1854.

When a priest appeared in Fitchburg, he was insulted. The church building was damaged.⁶ Rumors that the Catholic Church was making preparations to do harm to Protestants were very common. There was a city-wide panic in Bangor when residents found their houses marked with mysterious signs. It was rumored that these were symbols of the Inquisition. Any family whose house bore one was to be destroyed. They proved to be nothing more than the marks of a hairdresser who did not wish to repeat his calls.⁷ Portland, Maine, was terrified by a rumor that guns and muskets were hidden in St. Dominic's Church for use against the Protestants.⁸ Residents of this city were also alarmed by stories that their Irish servants were plotting to poison them. A priest was accused of bringing large quantities of poison into the city for this purpose.⁹ Unrest and hostility against the Church in this locality were also aroused by a popular report that the Irish were forming military companies and had bribed several liberal Protestants to lead them.¹⁰ Portland was a veritable hotbed of anti-Catholicism. Father John O'Donnell, pastor of St. Dominic's parish, did not dare to walk in the streets after dark. He was stoned by rowdies and insulted by children. The windows of the church were frequently smashed. The doors of the church were broken. The priest's house was damaged.¹¹

The Irish of Boston were accused of asking permission to carry a flag on July 4th representing George Washington with the Pope's foot on his neck.¹² It was said in Worcester that guns, powder, and bullets were being brought to Holy Cross College in preparation for a Catholic revolt. The Mayor even went to the station to meet the train to make sure that these armaments did not arrive.¹³ The rumor about Irish servant girls administering poison to their employers also cropped up in this city.¹⁴ They were accused of being ready to accomplish

⁶ *Ibid.*, Dec. 9, 1854.

⁷ Billington, *The Protestant Crusade*, p. 312.

⁸ *Pilot*, July 1, 1854.

⁹ *Ibid.* ¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*, Oct. 28, 1854.

¹² *Ibid.*, July 22, 1854.

¹³ Father Ciampi, S.J., to Rev. —, July 2, 1854 (*Georgetown Col. Arch.*, 276 4).

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

this wholesale massacre on July 3rd. In Dorchester the church that had been partly finished by Father Fitzsimmons was blown up on July 3rd.¹⁵ The rowdies who did this, however, were denounced at a town meeting held on July 7th. One of the leaders of this assembly was the Rev. Thomas B. Fox, a Protestant minister. St. Peter's Church at Southbridge was badly damaged on July 14th.¹⁶

Many efforts were made to incite a riot in Lawrence, but the Irish refused to be trapped.¹⁷ The conspirators finally were able to make use of an incident created by a drunken native named Goodridge. He hoisted a flag with the union down. A crowd assembled and insisted that the flag should be properly flown. Goodridge refused. The crowd tore the flag down. It was then placed on a pole and nailed to Goodridge's house, amid the cheers of both the Irish and the natives. Meanwhile, the firemen of Syphon 3, whose engine house was a few yards away, saw an opportunity to create trouble. They called on the "Americans" to rally. About fifteen hundred persons responded. Some members of the Lawrence Brass Band also appeared. The mob paraded the streets, meeting no opposition. The Catholic church on Haverhill Street was stoned. They then moved on to Common Street, where a few Irish lived. The sons of Erin paid no attention to them. The crowd left the district, gathered new recruits, and came back. The windows of a store, owned by an Englishman, John Lawrence, were smashed. Then the windows in every house in which an Irishman resided between this store and Jackson Street were broken. The gang began to disperse after this. Several hundred came along Common Street. Irishmen, who would have been much more prudent if they had stayed at home, were on the sidewalk.¹⁸ One rash lad in the group dared the marchers to fight. They were quite willing. A riot started. The bell of Engine House 2 was rung. Reinforcements arrived for the natives. Further damage was done to the houses. The Mayor appeared

¹⁵ *Boston Evening Transcript*, July 6, 1854; *Boston Daily Courier*, July 7, 1854.

¹⁶ *Pilot*, July 29, 1854. ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, July 15, 1854.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* I suppose they were badly upset by the damage done to their homes.

on the scene and read the Riot Act. No attention was paid to him, since he had only a few policemen to assist him. The members of the Lawrence Light Artillery, who customarily would be called out to quell such a fracas, were part of the rioters. The police did arrest some men who carried firearms, but they were rescued by their Native companions. The mob then rushed the houses of the Irish, but the occupants fired muskets at them and drove them back. After throwing stones for another half-hour, the Natives finally retired.¹⁹

Manchester, New Hampshire, was the scene of another riot. Some Irish boys built a bonfire to celebrate the night before the Fourth of July. The police put it out several times. A crowd was attracted to the scene, and, unfortunately, the lads threw rocks and injured several of the onlookers. Instead of using some common sense and looking on the affair as the work of rough boys, retaliation was decided upon. At daybreak on July 4th a large number of armed men assaulted the dwellings of the Irish. Ten or fifteen houses were almost completely demolished. The stained-glass windows in St. Ann's Church were broken. An adequate number of policemen were on the scene, but did nothing. Hundreds of women and children had to flee from their homes and seek safety in the woods or in homes of neighbors.²⁰

Apparently most of these outrages were not part of a planned series of attacks upon the Church. It should, however, be pointed out that in many cases a common technique was used. The attempt to create a riot on Fort Hill, the Angel Gabriel's crusade, and the Lawrence riot, all had the common objective of provoking the Irish. If the promoters succeeded in this, they knew that it would be the Irish who would be accused of disturbing the peace and not the Natives. And that, of course, would mean another prop to the claim that the Irish and their religion were a detriment to the State and Nation. Moreover, it would appear that the rumors concerning a Catholic attempt

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, loc. cit.; July 22, 29, 1854; Gustavus Myers, *History of Bigotry in the United States* (New York, 1943), pp. 197-198.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, July 22, 1854; in this case *The Pilot* quoted the *Union Democrat*; *Boston Daily Courier*, July 7, 1854; *Dover Inquirer*, July 11, 1854.

to carry out wholesale poisonings must have originated from some common source. This is likewise true of the stories that arms were concealed in Catholic churches. These rumors were very probably circulated by a new anti-Catholic society called the Order of the Star-Spangled Banner, or more commonly known as the Know-Nothings.

II

This organization originated in New York in 1852. By the fall of 1853 branches of the order had been established in Massachusetts. It was extremely well organized and attracted thousands to its ranks. Full use was made of those intriguing devices, secrecy and elaborate rituals. Members were introduced to the thrilling experience of knowing secret passwords, handclasps, and signals for aid when they were in trouble. They had the elation of seeing their unannounced candidates for political honors swept into office over the heads of known nominees who had been conceded every chance of winning. The Order had as its primary objective opposition to immigrants and to Catholics.

The Know-Nothing ritual demonstrates conclusively the bigotry of the order. There were two degrees. To be eligible for these a candidate had to be a citizen of the United States, the child of "American-born parents, and paternal or maternal grandparent, or of parent or grandparent who took an active part in the Revolutionary War in favor of this Government." ²¹ Later, this was revised. A candidate had to be a "native-born American, a Protestant born of Protestant parents; reared under Protestant influence, and not united in marriage with a Roman Catholic." ²²

Having passed this Hitlerian requirement, the candidate was ready for admission to the first degree. During this ceremony he was asked:

²¹ *Records of Subordinate Council No. 5, of Boston, of the American Party, 1853-1856* (Mass. Hist. Soc. Arch., 35 30).

²² *Ibid.*

Are you willing to use your influence and vote only for native-born American citizens for all offices of honor, trust or profit in the gift of the people, the exclusion of all foreigners and Roman Catholics in particular, and without regard to party predilections? ²³

Reception of the second degree made a member eligible for office in the order. He could also be an official candidate for political office. Aspirants for this degree were asked to pledge that

... if it may be done legally, you will, when elected or appointed to any official station conferring on you the power to do so, remove all foreigners, aliens, or Roman Catholics from office or place, and that you will in no case appoint such to any office or place in your gift.²⁴

Among the various instructions given to members was this:

It has no doubt been long apparent to you, brothers, that foreign influence and Roman Catholicism have been making steady and alarming progress in our country. You cannot have failed to observe the significant transition of the foreign-born and Romanist from a character quiet, retiring or even abject, to one bold, threatening, turbulent and even despotic at its appearance and assumptions. You must have become alarmed at the systematic and rapidly augmenting power of these dangerous and unnatural elements of our national condition. So it is, brothers, with others besides yourselves, in every State of the Union. A sense of danger has struck the great heart of the Nation. In every city, town and hamlet the danger has been seen and the alarm sounded. And hence true men have devised this Order as a means of disseminating patriotic principles, of keeping alive the fire of national virtue, of fostering the national intelligence, and of advancing America and the American interest, on the one side, and on the other of checking the stride of the foreign or alien, of thwarting the machinations and subverting the deadly plans of the Jesuit and Papist.²⁵

²³ Billington, *The Protestant Crusade*, p. 384.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 385.

²⁵ Myers, *History of Bigotry in the United States*, p. 188.

The influence of this nativistic society was apparent in the autumn elections of 1853. The spring elections of 1854 made it clear that a strong new political force had appeared. Working in secret, it carried election after election. Politicians whose success appeared to be certain discovered when the votes were counted that they had been defeated by the secret candidates of the order. By the fall of 1854 the order was in a secure position to win a series of political triumphs, and apparently was destined to send its presidential nominee to the White House in 1856.

The Know-Nothings won their greatest victory in November, 1854, when they swept Massachusetts. In preparation for this the leaders of the order made bargains with everyone who was willing to compromise with bigotry in order to further his political fortunes. Henry Wilson, trading honor for success, joined the Free-Soil Party to the Know-Nothings. Ultra-temperance advocates, members of the Order of United Americans, the Guard of Liberty, and other minor organizations entered the ranks. Politics at this time in Massachusetts was extremely confused. Voters were casting about for a party to which they might adhere. The appearance of the Know-Nothing Party was most opportune. It gave them a haven. Some, of course, had little or no interest in the anti-Catholic program, but the great majority did. Those who did not certainly cannot be justified merely because bigotry did not concern them. They were guilty of wanton carelessness and indifference in regard to one of the most prized principles of the Republic, religious liberty.

When the elections were over, the Know-Nothing gubernatorial candidate, Henry J. Gardner, an opportunistic ex-Whig, had been elected Governor. The Know-Nothings had won every seat in the Senate and had 376 seats of the 379 in the House.²⁶ The best historian of anti-Catholicism describes the General Court in these words:

Only thirty-four had served in the assembly before, and a great majority were mechanics, laborers, clerks, school teach-

²⁶ Edward Channing, *A History of the United States* (New York, 1937), VI, 135.

ers, and ministers who understood nothing of the governmental process and were ill equipped to learn. One wag suggested that the election sermon for this legislature should be based on Job 8:9: "For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing."²⁷

There is a very interesting point involved in this election. One claim of the Know-Nothings was that the Irish brought corruption into politics. But the records of a Know-Nothing Council in East Boston show that on November 8th, just before the elections, the treasurer was authorized "to procure and pay for 2500 votes!"²⁸ In other words, the Know-Nothings were going to corrupt voters by buying their ballots. If one council did this, is it unfair to surmise that others also engaged in this despicable trick? Could it be that part of the sweeping Know-Nothing victory was based on bribery?

III

This Know-Nothing Legislature had not been in existence very long when it began to attack the Church. The basis was the time-worn, but ever appealing, accusation that convents and nunneries were dens of immorality and prisons in which those who entered their confines were forcibly detained for illicit purposes. This attack was not haphazard. It was carefully conceived and executed by some central group. Printed petitions to the General Court, asking for an investigation of nunneries, were circulated throughout the State, especially in small towns where people were less well informed and generally much more bigoted. When the leaders were ready to act, the legislators began to receive demands from such places as Foxboro, Ludlow, Milford, Oxford, Marlboro, Leominster, and Dracut.²⁹ On January 22nd Representative Littlefield, of Fox-

²⁷ Billington, *The Protestant Crusade*, p. 413.

²⁸ *Records, Subordinate Council No. 5, Nov. 8, 1854* (Mass. Hist. Soc. Arch., 35 30).

²⁹ I have found printed petitions from twenty-seven towns. Because of unessential differences they can be divided into two types: Twenty-one of one type came from twenty-one widely separated towns; this is true also of the six of the other type. The petitions can be found in the *Massachusetts State Archives, Sen. Doc. 4015* (1855).

boro, presented the petition of E. P. Carpenter and others to the House. A joint committee from the Senate and House was formed. It was charged with the duty of investigating this and similar petitions.³⁰

Almost a month went by, and then on February 15th the Committee made a request to the House. Although it had never been given any specific title, it now styled itself the Joint Special Committee on the Inspection of Nunneries and Convents.³¹ The members asked for permission "to visit and examine . . . theological seminaries, boarding-schools, academies, nunneries, convents, and other institutions of a like character. . . ." The widening of the scope of their investigations very likely came about because of a petition the House had received from P. D. Walbridge and others asking for the examination, not only of convents and nunneries, but also schools (Catholic, of course). This was referred to the Committee.³² The request was granted without any debate. Here-with began a most inglorious enterprise which was to end in infamy.

The Committee made three visits. One was to Holy Cross College, where they found nothing objectionable.³³ They dined royally at one of the local hotels and violated the laws of the State by purchasing and consuming intoxicating drinks. The expense was charged to the State. The next visit was to the Academy of the Sisters of Notre Dame in Roxbury. Then they went to call on the Sisters of Notre Dame who conducted a

³⁰ *Boston Daily Advertiser*, April 18, 24, 1855. In this discussion of the Nunnery Committee, I generally cite the *Boston Advertiser*. I do this because the *Boston Diocesan Archives* contain a scrapbook in which are preserved all items that *The Advertiser* printed relative to the Nunnery Committee. It was very convenient to use this. I have, however, thoroughly checked with all other available contemporary newspapers. *The Advertiser* gave by far the most complete and accurate account. The paper became deeply involved with the Committee, but its record of hearings and facts was very honest and impartial. In fact, as will be seen, there was no reason for its not being so. The scrapbook, which is titled *Hiss-iana*, also contains an incomplete series of clippings on the matter from the *Boston Courier*.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Committee on the Judiciary*, Sen. Doc. 4141, Jan. 24, 1855 (*Mass. State Arch.*).

³³ *Report of the Joint Committee on the Inspection of Nunneries and Convents*, April 24, 1855, House Doc. 4015 (1855) (*Mass. State Arch.*).

school in Lowell. In neither case did they find anything to complain about.³⁴ But, meanwhile, respectable citizens found that their conduct was totally unbecoming the dignity of the State of Massachusetts.

At the Academy of the Sisters of Notre Dame in Roxbury, the Nunnery Committee displayed a shameful lack of regard for even the barest semblance of gentlemanly conduct and decency. Following a practice they had adopted in Worcester, they augmented their number by inviting several other members of the Legislature to accompany them, and, also, an Alderman and the Chief of Police of Roxbury. This group, which could in no way be conceived as having been created by the Legislature, since it included men who had not been appointed for the purpose by that body, was represented to the Superior as having been commissioned by the General Court.³⁵ The Sisters had received no previous notice of the Committee's intention to visit the Academy, nor did the Committee give the Superior any definite information as to the purpose of the visit. They merely said they were a legislative committee.³⁶

When it became known in the school that the Know-Nothings had arrived, the children were terror-stricken and screamed with fright. The Sisters, too, were greatly alarmed and disturbed.³⁷ After the Superior had greeted the investigators, she went back to the children, quieted them, and then returned and began to conduct the intruders through the building. Some of the Committee, evidently feeling that the Superior might not show them *everything*, proceeded on an exploration trip of their own, while the others accompanied Sister Mary Aloysia to the upper story.³⁸ Here, they invaded the bedrooms, opened closets, and inspected the Sisters' wearing apparel.³⁹ In one room a student, Caroline Crabb, was sick in bed. The Superior asked these impertinent priors not to disturb her. Yet several

³⁴ *Report of the Nunnery Committee, op. cit.*

³⁵ *Boston Daily Advertiser*, April 11, 1855.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Sisters of Notre Dame Academy, Roxbury, to the Committee investigating charges against the Nunnery Committee, April 9, 1855, *House Doc. 4015* (Mass. State Arch.).

³⁹ *Boston Daily Advertiser*, April 5, 1855.

THE CONVENT COMMITTEE, BETTER KNOWN AS THE SMELLING COMMITTEE,
in the exercise of their onerous, and arduous duties at the Ladies Catholic seminary RUXBURY



*Investigation of an old house,
on the premises.*



*The investigator discovers
a disappointed cartwheel, and,
thereby, the sad plight of the
poor victims who have been taken into
the convent.*



*Investigation of the
pantry key-hole*



*On opening the pantry-
door, the investigator discovers
a set of very small plates, which
the nuns had been surreptitiously placed
there for the purpose of making
as typical of the smelling committee*



*Investigation of the
clothes basket.*



Investigation of the clothes press.



*Investigation of the chimney.
Thrusts beginning to look dark
and mysterious.*



*Investigation of the dormitory
what was here discovered has
not yet been revealed.*



*Investigation of the pails and tray
The investigator, judging
from the appearance of his investigator,
is apprehensive of an unwanted guest
at the trough.*

AN ANTI-KNOW-NOTHING CARTOONIST DEPICTS THE ACTIVITIES OF THE NUNNERY COMMITTEE.

of them did, and violated the child's privacy by peering into the room. One of them even leaned so closely over Caroline that she could smell the cigar smoke on his breath.⁴⁰

They were then taken downstairs to the classroom, where they questioned the Sister in charge about her methods of teaching.⁴¹ Then they were conducted to the cellar stairway and were offered a lantern to light their way while they explored its mysteries. Most of them had common sense enough to see how ridiculous it would be to go searching through this basement and refused the lantern. But one unconvinced legislator, who had already made one uninvited trip to these dark regions, again descended to the cellar without a light, still seeking damaging evidence.⁴² During this tour of the premises the men time and again insultingly asked their guide if there were any boys in the house.⁴³

Meanwhile, those inquisitors who had chosen to go wandering about wherever they pleased were poking into every corner and cupboard, vainly seeking for evidences of those horrible customs that rumor declared were observed in convents and nunneries. They had even inspected with avidity the sink into which foul water was poured!⁴⁴ Some presumed to invade the chapel, where they so acted as to show that they had no respect for the sacredness of the place. Among these was Joseph Hiss, a member of the Legislature from Boston.

Joseph Hiss was, as events were to show, one of the most unsavory of characters. A tailor by trade, he had been forced by the pressure of his creditors to leave Barre and come to Boston. Here he contrived to advance himself into high places in the Know-Nothing Party. He was the secretary of its 1854 State Convention, and later became Judge Advocate of the organization.⁴⁵ The Massachusetts General Court has never had a more unworthy member than this man.

When the intruders entered the chapel, Sister Mary Joseph was already there saying her prayers. The poor Sister was horribly

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, April 11, 12, 1855.

⁴¹ *Boston Daily Bee*, quoted by the *Boston Daily Advertiser*, April 3, 1855.

⁴² *Boston Daily Advertiser*, April 11, 1855. ⁴³ *Ibid.*, April 12, 1855.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, April 5, 1855. ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, April 18, 1855.

frightened — so much so that “she shook all over, like a leaf.”⁴⁶ The chapel, of course, was very small, and Sister Mary Joseph found herself surrounded by a group of boisterous men. She attempted to escape, but Hiss put one of his hands on her shoulder and detained her.⁴⁷ He began to question her. She declined to speak in the chapel and insisted that she be allowed to leave. Hiss followed, and outside began to interrogate her in a most insinuating manner. Did she like convent life? Was she free to leave? The Sister kept trying to break off the conversation. Hiss refused to cease his torments. He even presumed to reach down and take into his hands the rosary that hung at her side. Poor Sister Mary Joseph was so terrified that she scarcely knew what she was saying. Finally, in desperation, she begged him to speak to the Superior, and managed to get away from this disrespectful stranger.⁴⁸

The house was so small that it would not have taken more than ten minutes to go through it from top to bottom, yet this gang managed to consume almost a half-hour.⁴⁹ Then they started off for the Norfolk House where there awaited them a sumptuous banquet, illegally watered with champagne — to be paid for, of course, by the State.

This visit to the Roxbury Academy took place on March 26th. By late evening the Bishop had been informed of the actions of the obnoxious group,⁵⁰ and was writing a protest to the House of Representatives. He made no attempt to restrain his indignation, but in a very direct and sharp declaration denounced the proceedings at Roxbury. Neither the Sisters of Notre Dame nor any other Sisters engaged in similar work, he said, were unwilling to explain to the members of the Legislature the nature of their institutions, but a protest must be made when such an examination became offensive and unpleasant. If it continued, they would be “compelled legally to assert and defend the inviolability of their dwellings.”⁵¹ The Bishop concluded with the very pointed request that

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, April 12, 1855.⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, *loc. cit.*; April 27, 1855.⁴⁹ *Ibid.*⁵⁰ *Memoranda*, March 26, 1855.⁵¹ Bishop Fitzpatrick to the Massachusetts General Court, undated (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

... your honorable body be pleased to compose its committee otherwise than it is now composed, and to appoint thereon other members whose opinions may coincide with those above expressed in relation to the duties of respect, reserve, and decorum which are due from gentlemen to ladies. And if in your honorable body sufficient members may not be found who concur in such opinions, to make up the number of 24,⁵² then your petitioner respectfully prays that as many as do concur, be the same more or less, be appointed and may form such a committee to the exclusion of all others.⁵³

Apparently the Legislature paid no attention to the Bishop's protest, but a real storm was brewing in another quarter. The *Boston Daily Advertiser* was at that time edited by Nathan and Charles Hale, two Bostonians who never hesitated to engage in a controversy when they believed that the liberties of the people were being violated. Charles Hale was told of the Roxbury visitation by some friend and immediately composed an editorial denouncing the actions of the Committee. It began with the ringing declaration "OUR HOUSES ARE OUR CASTLES."⁵⁴ Then in a very careful and well-considered account the editor described the deeds of the invaders of the Roxbury Academy. "Is such a record," he concluded, "fit to form a page in the history of the free and enlightened Commonwealth of Massachusetts in the nineteenth century?" Is this the way the Bill of Rights embodied in the Constitution of the State is respected? Is this the manner in which the guarantee of the Constitution of the United States against unreasonable search is fulfilled? If these things are allowed, can any group of women feel that they are safe from the intrusion of "rude men"? "The Revolution was fought in vain if the great American principles of private right and domestic security are now to be set at naught."⁵⁵

⁵² The Sisters were so excited that they were not able to determine just how many men did invade the house. The number given by the Bishop is based on the fact that it required two omnibuses, each seating twelve, to convey the group to Roxbury. Actually no one ever discovered just how many did go to the Academy.

⁵³ Bishop Fitzpatrick to the Massachusetts General Court (*ibid.*).

⁵⁴ *Boston Daily Advertiser*, March 31, 1855. ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

The members of the General Court were infuriated. Within a few hours after *The Advertiser* appeared on the streets, demands were made in both Houses for an investigation. The legislators were not disturbed by the conduct of their Committee, but they were greatly incensed because the Hales had dared to criticize them publicly. Even Hiss had the courage to challenge the article. No time was lost in appointing a joint committee of inquiry.⁵⁶ The motives inspiring this action can be easily discerned from the fact that Senator James E. Carpenter, of Foxboro, one of the party that visited the Academy, was brazenly made chairman of the group.⁵⁷

The investigating committee showed no great inclination to begin its duties, and it was not until eleven days after its establishment that the first public meeting was held. Senator Carpenter at this time resigned, and Representative Griffin, of Charlestown, assumed his duties. The hearing went on for several days. Members, both authorized and unauthorized, of the Nunnery Committee, the Hales, the Sisters of Notre Dame whose home had been invaded, and Caroline Crabb, whose bedroom had been trespassed upon, were summoned.⁵⁸

The Hales were questioned as to who wrote the article and about their sources of information. Charles Hale was revealed to be the author. His knowledge of the situation, he testified, came first from individuals whose names he did not believe it was necessary to disclose. He based his first article on this material. Subsequent accounts were derived from the Sisters.⁵⁹ Although all of the Sisters were called, only the Superior, Sister Mary Aloysia, appeared on April 10th. She was accompanied by Mrs. Boland, the Bishop's sister, and two Protestant gentlemen, Deacon Samuel May and Colonel Thomas C. Amory.⁶⁰ The Superior presented a statement to the Committee requesting that the other members of her community should be ex-

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, April 2, 3, 1855.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, April 9, 1855.

⁵⁸ Charles Hale to Benjamin Stevens, April 8, 1855; Investigating Committee to the Sisters of Notre Dame and Caroline Crabb, April 9, 1855; Investigating Committee to certain members of the General Court, April 9, 1855, *Sen. Doc.* 4295 (*Mass. State Arch.*).

⁵⁹ *Boston Daily Advertiser*, April 9, 1855.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, April 11, 1855.

cused from attendance. This document also explained in detail why the Nunnery Committee's actions were objectionable.⁶¹ She was questioned very carefully and minutely by Charles Hale, members of the investigating committee, and the Nunnery Committee. A sensation was created, when, in response to Hale's interrogations, she identified Hiss as the man who had declared his name was Evans. This was the only new fact that was revealed. The members of both committees could in no way elicit from her admissions that mitigated the seriousness of the charges made in *The Advertiser* and the Sisters' written narrative. Charles Hale, of course, was entirely friendly to her. Sister Mary Aloysia was kept on the stand during the entire session. At its close she was requested to bring Sister Mary Joseph and Caroline Crabb before the Committee on the next day.⁶² At this hearing (which was the last) no substantial changes in previous accounts were obtained from the Sisters or Miss Crabb. The members of the Nunnery Committee also had their opportunity to testify. In their estimation they had deported themselves in a most exemplary manner. Apparently, only Charles Hale took the opportunity to cross-examine them.

One very enlightening revelation was secured by Hale concerning the dishonesty of some of the investigators. William B. May, of Roxbury, was testifying. He had gone to Roxbury with the Committee. He admitted he was not an official member. He asked to be allowed to go, he said, because he had a sister in a convent in Maryland. Hale did not follow up the matter, but several other investigators did. May declared he had gone to Baltimore to see his sister, who was at Emmitsburg. At Baltimore he was told he would not be permitted to see her. Apparently this testimony made a great impression on some members of the investigating board. Here was clear evidence that something was amiss, otherwise why should May not be allowed to visit his sister? Hale again questioned the witness:

⁶¹ The Sisters of Notre Dame Academy to the Committee to investigate charges against the Committee on Nunneries, April 9, 1855, *Sen. Doc. 4015* (*Mass. State Arch.*); *Boston Advertiser*, *loc. cit.*

⁶² *Boston Daily Advertiser*, *loc. cit.*

Q. How far is Emmitsburg from Baltimore? *A.* About forty miles.

Q. Who told you at Baltimore you could not see your sister? *A.* Friends.

Q. Was it any of the authorities of the Catholic Church, or officers in charge of the convent? *A.* No.

Q. Yet after traveling four hundred miles to Baltimore to see your sister, you refrained from going a short distance farther, on account of the representations of these friends? *A.* Yes.

Mr. Hale. You must have been anxious to see her! What became of your answers to the letters she has written you? *A.* I never answered any of them.⁶³

Here was a man who never replied to letters written to him by his sister, who never took the trouble to go near her convent, blandly testifying that he was not allowed to visit her!

It was during this interrogation of the various gentlemen who had sallied forth to Roxbury that Charles Hale made the charges which unveiled the villainy of Joseph Hiss and cast a shadow upon the reputation of many legislators.

After a long series of questions about his activities during the Roxbury visit, Charles Hale began to interrogate Hiss in regard to other committee investigations, and especially the one at Lowell. Some objections were raised, but the Committee permitted Hale to continue. Finally, after some members began to show impatience, Hale ceased attempting to drag admissions from Hiss and made a direct and startling charge. Hiss, he said, had taken a woman who was not his wife to Lowell with him. He had registered her at the Washington House along with the members of the Committee. Her expenses had been paid for by the State.

Representative Griffin, the chairman, then broke in and stated that he had been to Lowell and had found evidence enough to convince him of the truth of the charge. The investigating committee, after consultation, decided that the matter should be referred to the two Houses for further instructions. The rest of the hearing was occupied by speeches made by

⁶³ *Ibid.*, April 12, 1855.

several members of the Nunnery Committee, and a long recapitulation of the case which was read by Charles Hale.⁶⁴

The report of the results of this investigation was made on April 17, 1855. After reviewing the right of the people to be secured against unwarranted intrusion, the Committee then went on to the reasons why the Nunnery Committee was appointed. Then it proceeded to comment upon the authorization that had been given to visit nunneries. When this was done, said the Committee, certainly it was not intended that an inquisition should be established. No legislator thought it was a commission to invade private property. Only quiet and orderly visits, which had been previously arranged, were contemplated. The next section of the report was a peculiar mixture of criticism and attempts to excuse the acts of the accused group. The Committee tried to find out why the power to visit institutions was sought. The chairman of the Nunnery Committee refused to give such information, holding that it should be disclosed in that body's report. But, said the Committee, we believe there was no real basis for such a request. Then it endeavored to give a pallid justification for what it had just condemned by stating that a mere mistake in judgment had been made. The actual invasion was next considered. The Committee did not intend to enter the Academy "against the wishes of the inmates," nor were they rude and impolite. As for the charges of *The Advertiser*, the Committee would not admit that all were true, yet there was sufficient evidence to justify the article written by the editors "in the legitimate exercise of their rights as conductors of a public journal." Despite the Sisters' testimony, it was denied "that terror was created in the house by the visitors, that the chapel was rudely invaded, or that any displeasure, known to be such, was exhibited by the inmates at the time." Finally, among other observations it was remarked that the visitors of necessity had to approach Caroline Crabb's bed. (They had to cross one bedroom to reach her bed, which was in an alcove!)⁶⁵

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, April 12, 1855.

⁶⁵ *Report of the Joint Committee to investigate the Nunnery Committee, April 17, 1855, Sen. Doc. 4295 (Mass. State Arch.).*

To sum up the whole matter, it seems fair to say that outside of a half-hearted concession to *The Advertiser*, based perhaps more on political expediency than respect for freedom of the press, the report was at least a bungling attempt to whitewash the activities of the Nunnery Committee. If a more severe judgment were to be passed, it could be justly declared that it was an insult to the integrity of the Sisters of Notre Dame. Practically every declaration of theirs was implicitly rejected as being untrue.

Meanwhile, the House of Representatives had appointed a committee to investigate the conduct of Joseph Hiss. Their proceedings were a farce. They held no public sessions. No report of their hearings was given to the House. They merely announced that they had not found "indubitable evidence" of misconduct. Since an abundance of proof was easily uncovered later on, one can only conclude that the committee's desire was to conceal the misdemeanors of this prominent Know-Nothing.⁶⁶ The report was unanimously accepted by the House.

A new light was thrown upon the mentality of the Know-Nothings when the Nunnery Committee made its report. It began with a pious reflection upon the sanctity of religious belief. Then a most startling revelation was made. Convents actually did exist in cities and large towns of the State! How did they know it? They had seen them, and the inmates had told them. Now, said the Committee, "in those parts of the institutions to which they were admitted they saw no indications of physical restraint, yet they have no reason to suppose that their general rules and regulations differ materially from those of other convents." In other words, even if everything was all right, it must be wrong. An account was given as to why they had asked for authorization to visit these and similar places. The request was made because evidence of a very derogatory character was received from several witnesses — who these were, was not stated. Of course, after they received it, they never attempted to enter an institution without permission. After describing their visits

⁶⁶ *Boston Daily Advertiser*, April 20, 1855.

to Worcester, Roxbury, and Lowell, the Committee was forced to admit that they found no evidence "to warrant legislation in reference to them as convents." Because other institutions of a similar kind are "prisons of innocent victims," the convents at Worcester, Roxbury, and Lowell should not suffer. No such charges could be proved against them. Yet, only a few paragraphs before, the Committee had declared that, although they saw no evidence, they were quite sure that abuses did exist in these places! The report ended with a recommendation that a bill submitted by the Committee on Education, providing for the inspection of private educational institutions, should be passed.⁶⁷

But the history of the Nunnery Committee did not close with this report. Although the decision of the men who investigated Joseph Hiss had been accepted unanimously by the House, a movement was soon in progress to have the evidence taken at the secret hearings revealed. There were several reasons for this. In the first place, some participants in the inquiry expected that the testimony given during the sessions would be disclosed to the House. This was not done. Secondly, many stories were being circulated about similar misconduct by numerous legislators. Hiss himself was bellowing that if any further action was taken against him, he would drag others down into the mire. Finally, a number of legislators were determined to give the charges a thorough airing, either because of political motives or to protect their own reputations. A very resolute attempt was made to block revelation of the evidence. But it was in the end forced from the chairman. It was disclosed at a secret session. Although it was clear that the Committee had not conducted a satisfactory search, Hiss almost escaped. But that worthy gentleman gave his enemies a grand opportunity to search into his habits. He sent in his resignation from the House. This was read at the next regular session. Representative Griffin saw the chance he had been seeking. Hiss, he declared, could not do this. It was an admission of

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, April 24, 1855; *Report of the Joint Committee on the Inspection of Nunneries and Convents, April 24, 1855, House Doc. 4105* (Mass. State Arch.).

guilt. Then he gave a summary of the testimony he had gathered. And he carried the day. A new committee was ordered to examine the conduct of Hiss.⁶⁸

A series of hearings began on April 27, 1855. Sister Mary Aloysia and Sister Mary Joseph were summoned and appeared, accompanied by Mrs. Boland, Colonel Thomas C. Amory, ex-Mayor Seaver of Boston, and Thomas Gill. The Sisters were subjected to a most rigorous and protracted cross-examination by Ben Butler, Hiss's counsel, who at times strayed off into entirely irrelevant matter, apparently for the purpose of wearying, and then trapping, them into some contradiction. Nor did the chairman spare them. Indeed, he was so pressing, when Sister Mary Joseph was testifying, that Seaver and the Bishop's sister felt compelled to protest.⁶⁹

The investigation then took up the Lowell events. Witness after witness was summoned. Undeniable evidence of the association between Hiss and the woman, falsely named Mrs. Patterson, was produced. All the scheming and stratagems of the resourceful Butler and his associate, Benjamin Dean, could not destroy the testimony.⁷⁰

The Committee concluded its work on May 7th, and submitted its report the next day. Once again the visit to Roxbury was proclaimed to have been entirely proper. Now it was said that the Superior and Sister Mary Joseph had merely misunderstood the gentlemen. (Miss Crabb's complaint had been conveniently cared for by not summoning her. Hence the Committee did not commit itself on that incident.) Indeed, the Committee was somewhat indignant about the affair. There never would have been any trouble if it had not been "for the interference of a Catholic Bishop, of a Jesuit,⁷¹ of several Priests,⁷² of newspapers opposed to the present dominant

⁶⁸ *Boston Daily Advertiser*, April 23, 24, 1855.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, April 27, 1855.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, April 28, 30, May 2, 3, 4, 7, 1855.

⁷¹ Father McElroy, S.J., to whom the Superior gave an account of the visit.

⁷² Father Galligher, a visitor on the day the Committee went to Roxbury, and Father O'Beirne, pastor of the St. Joseph's parish, within whose limits the Academy was situated.

party,⁷³ and of a politician and lawyer . . ." ⁷⁴ But the Committee did condemn the conduct of Hiss at Lowell. He did associate with "Mrs. Patterson." He did charge her board and room to the State. He did lie about her and say he did not know her. He did disgrace himself and the House of Representatives. He should be expelled.⁷⁵

No detailed account of the further adventures of Joseph Hiss would be relevant to this History. Let it suffice to say that during the sessions of the Committee he withdrew his resignation,⁷⁶ and from then on fought to keep his seat in the House. The condemning report drew a long written protest from him, in which, among other things, he offered to prove that many other members of the House were guilty of improprieties similar to his.⁷⁷ Nor was the ingenuity of Ben Butler able to save him. Hiss was condemned by the House.⁷⁸ He refused to give up his seat, and the Sergeant-at-Arms finally had to be instructed to escort him forcibly from the legislative chamber.⁷⁹

Joseph Hiss took revenge on his former associates by proclaiming in public to those who would listen to him that a large number of the legislators were guilty of immoralities.⁸⁰ No investigation was ever made of this charge. *The Pilot* believed that Hiss was a scapegoat, sacrificed to protect others. The editor asserted that threats were made to investigate the conduct of "several members, who hold their heads very high . . ." This, he hoped, would not be done. Too much filth had already been uncovered. Further probing would only bring additional disgrace to the State.⁸¹

⁷³ The *Boston Advertiser*, of course, and also the *Boston Courier*, which carried full accounts of the doings of the Nunnery Committee.

⁷⁴ Peleg W. Chandler, one of the Commissioners of Emigration. He was a kind and tolerant gentleman, who could view the emigration situation with equanimity, charity, and sympathy.

⁷⁵ *Boston Daily Advertiser*, May 8, 1855.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, May 3, 1855.

⁷⁷ Memorial of Joseph Hiss to the House of Representatives, undated, *Sen. Doc. 4297* (Mass. State Arch.); *Boston Daily Advertiser*, May 10, 1855.

⁷⁸ *Boston Daily Advertiser*, May 11, 1855.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, May 15, 1855.

⁸⁰ *Pilot*, June 16, 1855.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, May 5, 1855.

IV

The Know-Nothings were exceedingly disturbed because the Irish had entered the ranks of the State militia. One company, the Columbian Artillery, had existed for many years, and had received numerous Irishmen into its ranks, while the others were of very recent origin. These companies were known as the Jackson Guards, the Bay State Artillery, the Sarsfield Guards, the Jackson Musketeers, Company G of Lawrence, and Shield's Artillery. The Jackson Guards was the first distinctly Irish company to be organized since the break-up of the Montgomery Guards. The first petition of James McAuliffe to be permitted to form the company was rejected.⁸² Objections, however, were overcome, probably through political maneuvering. The other companies were established in rapid succession.

These military activities were not fully approved by some Catholics. *The Pilot* published a series of articles on the matter in which it was said that those who had charge of the companies were too anxious to fill up the ranks. The result was that anyone was admitted without sufficient investigation as to his character. Sometimes these individuals disgraced themselves and the company.⁸³ The paper also condemned the enlistment of Irishmen who had not been naturalized. Such practices, it said, were very objectionable to the Natives, and created a hostile attitude.⁸⁴

The Bay State Artillery was abolished in September, 1854, because of an infraction of military regulations. Governor Gardner ordered the dissolution of the other companies immediately after he took office. In most cases the companies refused to recognize the constitutionality of the order and adopted a policy of passive resistance. Whereupon the Adjutant General forced his way into their armories and seized the equipment. Some of the captains of the companies immediately started lawsuits against Stone. In fact, Stone was arrested in Worcester, after he had taken the arms of the Jackson Guards, on the com-

⁸² *Ibid.*, June 25, 1853. ⁸³ *Ibid.*, Sept. 10, 1853.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, Sept. 24, Oct. 1, 1853.

plaint of Captain Driscoll.⁸⁵ None of the legal steps were, however, effective, and the companies disappeared from the military rolls of the State.

The Know-Nothings passed a law making the reading of the common version of the Scriptures compulsory. Another law was enacted depriving the ecclesiastical authorities of the Diocese of all control of church property.⁸⁶

Many other attempts to pass anti-Catholic laws were made, but failed. No one was to hold office who owed temporal or spiritual allegiance to a foreign prince, which meant, of course, the Pope. It was proposed that churches should be searched for arms. Catholic schools were to be opened for the inspection of public officials and school committees. Teachers employed in private schools would have to obtain the approval of school committees or superintendents before practicing their profession. Another bill specified that children could not be employed in mills unless they attended schools approved by school committees. None of these bills were enacted. In fact, after all the promises and threats of the Know-Nothings, the results obtained by them, as far as Catholics were concerned, amounted to very little. What was the reason?

A number of elements enter into the explanation. In the first place, it should be understood that the political inexperience of the Know-Nothings resulted in the Free-Soilers seizing control, to a large extent, of legislative affairs. The Free-Soilers seem to have allowed the Know-Nothings a certain amount of freedom in pushing their anti-Catholic program at the outset of the 1855 legislative session. Then, when the Know-Nothings had bungled it and disgraced themselves with the Nunnery Committee, the Free-Soilers grasped the opportunity and from then on smothered the anti-Catholic ambitions of the order. It must also be remembered that there were decent men in the General Court; some were misguided and misinformed about Catholicism, but they were honest. When they realized how dishonest and unprincipled some of their leaders were, they rebelled and refused further coöperation. Finally, the Know-

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, Feb. 24, 1855.

⁸⁶ *Acts*, 1855, chap. 314.

Nothings disagreed amongst themselves as to the best method of attacking the Church. A few wanted to use violence. Others, and they constituted the great majority, had no desire for the destruction of churches and physical injury to Catholics. They wanted to use the law. But even they had no common plan. Rather they were divided into small factions, each with its own scheme. This confusion of aims destroyed the harmony that was necessary for success. The Know-Nothings lost themselves in disputes.⁸⁷ The Free-Soilers stepped in, gained control, and proceeded to enact their own program.

The decline of the Know-Nothing Party was as sudden as its rise. In September, 1855, *The Pilot* conceded that the Know-Nothings would send their candidate to the White House in 1856. But in October it revised its opinion and predicted that this would not happen.⁸⁸ In December they lost many elective offices in Boston.⁸⁹ They did win in the State elections of 1856, but their majority in the General Court was reduced. And probably many who were elected were paying only lip service to the party. *The Pilot* seems to have believed this was true of Governor Gardner, for in commenting upon his inaugural message the paper said that he, "with an affectation of fidelity to his Know-Nothing oaths," warned the Legislature of the danger to American institutions to be apprehended from aliens and Catholics.⁹⁰ This Legislature did not engage in any definite anti-Catholic program.

The new Republican Party began to show its strength in the Massachusetts presidential election of 1856. John C. Fremont, the Republican candidate, received 102,000 votes out of a total of 170,000. But Governor Gardner was again returned to office in 1857. In 1858, however, the Republicans gained control of the State, and Nathaniel P. Banks became governor. The Know-Nothing Party had failed to establish itself as a permanent political organization. This was due primarily to dissension in the ranks over the slavery issue, but an instinctive American

⁸⁷ *Pilot*, Nov. 25, 1854.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, Sept. 30, Oct. 14, 1855.

⁸⁹ Winsor, *The Memorial History of Boston*, III, 261; Father McElroy, S.J., to Father Stonestreet, S.J., Dec. 11, 1855 (*Fordham Arch.*, 223 W 15).

⁹⁰ *Pilot*, Jan. 24, 1857.

abhorrence for secret political activities, disapproval of the rowdiness of the Know-Nothings, and a recognition of the ridiculousness of the charges made against the Catholic Church also caused honest citizens to leave its ranks.

Was the Know-Nothing Party a complete failure? Did it accomplish nothing while it was in power? To answer this question it seems only fair to insist that a distinction must be made between Know-Nothing policies, as such, and policies that were acquired through association with other political groups. As to the distinctive Know-Nothing policies, the record of achievement amounted to little. Their anti-Catholic program failed. They never succeeded in establishing what they considered to be a proper law in relation to alien paupers. An amendment to the State Constitution, allowing only those who could read and write English to vote, was rejected. Two other amendments were passed. One required voters to be legally naturalized and to have been residents for twenty-one years. The other restricted the holding of office to native citizens. Both of these were rejected by a subsequent legislature.⁹¹ They did pass a personal liberty law to defeat the Fugitive Slave Act. This was repealed in 1860. They did seek for the removal of Judge Loring from office because of the part played by him in the fugitive slave cases. These two accomplishments, however, were definitely Free-Soil and not Know-Nothing.

In the general run of legislative acts there were some achievements. For example, laws regarding imprisonment for debt were wisely and substantially modified, and children who went to work before they were fifteen years of age were required to attend school for eleven weeks each year.⁹² But here again, these were not distinctive Know-Nothing policies. In many cases they had been agitated for over a period of years.

⁹¹ Billington, *The Protestant Crusade*, p. 413.

⁹² Handlin, *Boston's Immigrants*, pp. 209-210.

CHAPTER XIV

THE CRUCIBLE OF THE CIVIL WAR

I

DURING THE LONG DEBATE over slavery that preceded the Civil War, *The Pilot*, reflecting, probably, the views of the majority of Boston Catholics, consistently opposed the anti-slavery movement. Its position was based on adherence to the provisions of the Constitution, a claim that no program was advanced for the adjustment of the slaves to a free way of life, and an aversion to a sudden upsetting of the economic status, both of workingmen through the competition of free negroes and of the South by destroying its labor system without planning for some substitute. This last objection finally came to weigh heavily in the formulation of its policy. Free-Soilers were constantly attacked by *The Pilot*. They were described as a group who sought to violate the Constitution by urging that the Federal Government interfere in domestic affairs. They were charged with being willing to break up the Union to gain their purpose. They were accused of violating the laws of the State and Nation.¹ William Lloyd Garrison and his followers were condemned by *The Pilot* in language that was at times intemperate.² They were called radicals and revolutionaries, who countenanced any method that would assist their campaign.³

The Pilot did recognize that slavery was an evil. But the question of what to do about it was generally answered by stating that nothing could be done. This was based on a fear that the Union would be disrupted, that the economic consequences would be disastrous, and, finally, that the negro problem was one that never could be solved by political means. If the negro was to be freed, then the Catholic Church alone could carry out the transition from bondsman to freeman.

¹ *Pilot*, Sept. 18, 1852.

² *Ibid.*, Feb. 2, 1861.

³ *Ibid.*, Nov. 23, 1861.

In 1853 *The Pilot* condemned slavery as a curse and blight upon the land. Even the South recognized the truth of this, the paper declared, and would like to escape from the system, if it could do so honorably and without injury to slave-owners.⁴ A year later, when Douglas's doctrine of popular sovereignty and the repeal of the Missouri Compromise caused an angry flare-up of anti-slavery and pro-slavery passions, *The Pilot*, in alarm at the danger to the Union, declared itself willing to see slavery perpetuated, in order to protect the unity of the nation. The evil of slavery was preferable to a break between the North and the South.⁵ Until the Civil War *The Pilot* maintained this stand. When the conflict broke out, *The Pilot* opposed emancipation on the ground that it would cause too much economic hardship.

In July, 1861, the paper stated that the masses did not wish to abolish slavery in the South. To do so would only spread the negroes to every part of the country and drive out the white laborers.⁶ This, of course, was the expression of a very natural fear on the part of workingmen. They were apprehensive of a sudden flood of negroes, who would compete for their jobs and lower wage standards. Need it be pointed out that this desire to keep the negro out of industry has not been destroyed with the passage of time? In this year of 1943 riots have occurred in war-industry centres, caused in part by an influx of negro workmen seeking employment. In another issue of 1862 *The Pilot* claimed that it was dangerous to the interests of the white laborer to add suddenly to the labor market the services of millions of freedmen.⁷

Up to 1862 *The Pilot's* views on emancipation were similar to those held by conservative circles in Massachusetts. During 1860 and 1861 the abolition of slavery was strongly opposed in this State. Abolition meetings in Boston were broken up by mobs whose members were not the riffraff of the city, but respectable citizens, merchants, and traders with the South.⁸ But

⁴ *Ibid.*, Jan. 22, 1853. ⁵ *Ibid.*, July 22, 1854.

⁶ *Ibid.*, July 20, 1861. ⁷ *Ibid.*, Feb. 15, 1862.

⁸ Edith Ellen Ware, *Political Opinion in Massachusetts During the Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York, 1916), pp. 85-90.

by the end of 1861 the majority of the State's citizens had become accustomed to the idea of emancipation. Unfortunately, *The Pilot* refused to follow, and in fact adopted even stronger pro-slavery policies. At first it was willing to accept the prospect of emancipation in the future, when all difficulties connected with it had been provided for.⁹ This statement was made in February, 1862. A month later whoever handled this particular policy for the paper apparently came to the conclusion that slavery could never be dispensed with. Now, although it was conceded that slavery was an evil, yet it was contended that the best thing was to keep the negroes under "domestic (plantation) government."¹⁰ From this time on until abolition was accomplished, *The Pilot* held to its regrettable stand. Abolition was abstractly excellent, but practically unworkable. The negroes were better off in bondage than in freedom.¹¹ An April issue took a hopeless and shocking view of the situation. Slavery was an economic evil. But what would the country do without slaves? Misfortune was the lot of the African people. Nature had been niggardly with them. They had no ability to improve their state. The Caucasian race constantly opposed their advancement and enslaved them. When we call attention to these facts, the writer said, we do not quarrel with Providence. We simply point to things as they are. God withheld his blessings from the Africans for reasons of His own. But the white race pursues them and casts them into bondage. Even today the Africans are hunted down and enslaved. In 1861 eight vessels, sailing under the American flag and carrying over five thousand Africans, were captured by our cruisers and more than twelve slavers escaped. This carrying-off of human beings was wicked. "There is nothing in slavery to commend it." But the writer concluded:

Still abolitionism must be avoided. There are four million negroes in our midst. These we must keep; and in domestic slavery alone can they be managed. In view of the circumstances in which we are placed, the abolitionists and the pirate of slaves are equally pestiferous. The former [*sic*] enriches

⁹ *Pilot*, Feb. 22, 1862. ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, March 22, 1862. ¹¹ *Ibid.*, March 15, 1862.

himself by his act. But the latter [*sic*] is aiming at an effect from which this country could never recover. Our blacks must not be freed — both for their own sake and for ours. We are surrounded by evils; let us choose the smallest of them.¹²

When the emancipation of the slaves was finally proclaimed, and generally accepted, *The Pilot* was still opposed. In its view the State could never carry it out properly. There was only one organization that could accomplish the transition — the Catholic Church.¹³

II

The election of Lincoln turned the spectre of secession into a reality. On December 20, 1860, a South Carolina convention declared the union between that State and the United States of America dissolved. On February 8, 1861, the new union called the Confederate States of America was formed.

In Massachusetts there was at first no unity of opinion. "Dis-unionists" and "Union Savers" angrily debated with each other. Senator Crittenden's compromise proposal was ridiculed by anti-slavery men and supported by outstanding leaders such as Edward Everett and Amos A. Lawrence. Governor Andrew was urged to send delegates to a peace conference by one group. The opposition argued that no such step should be taken.¹⁴

The Pilot for a time seems to have been somewhat confused. On January 12th, its readers were exhorted to "Stand by the Union; fight for the Union; die for the Union."¹⁵ A week later the paper demanded that no mercy should be shown to secessionists.¹⁶ Yet a few weeks seem to have cooled its ardor, and when Governor Andrew began to prepare the militia for service in the field, his orders were condemned. The people were urged to refuse to support him. No attempt should be made to coerce the seceded States back into the Union.¹⁷

But when hostilities broke out, although *The Pilot* felt the conflict was due to untamed passion on one side and selfishness

¹² *Ibid.*, April 12, 1862. ¹³ Ware, *Political Opinion in Massachusetts*, p. 103.

¹⁴ *Commonwealth History of Massachusetts*, IV, 504.

¹⁵ *Pilot*, Jan. 12, 1861. ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Jan. 19, 1861. ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Feb. 2, 1861.

on the other, still the paper admitted that the only course left was vigorous action against the South.¹⁸ From then on the Union was supported unreservedly. The aid of the Irish was promised.¹⁹ *The Pilot* declared it would use all its resources and influence to hasten victory.²⁰ It was eager that nothing should be left undone to punish the leaders of the South. "Every man's hand should be lifted against them." No mercy was to be shown them. They had done everything they could to destroy the country, let them suffer for it.²¹

When it was proposed to draft men into the army, *The Pilot* took a reasonable stand. It hoped that it would not be necessary. Yet, on the other hand, it was pointed out that there was sufficient reason for the measure. Recruiting was not filling up the ranks. The rebellion had to be defeated. Men must not refuse the call of the Government. When the draft was ordered, *The Pilot* urged every able-bodied citizen to coöperate. It was unpleasant, but the country had to be saved.²²

The Conscription Act was not popular with the people. No special classifications were provided for married and single men. Exemption could easily be secured by those who had money, but not by the poor. One could escape a "particular draft" by paying three hundred dollars, or could avoid serving throughout the war by furnishing a substitute.²³ Such a system bore heavily upon the workingmen of the North. It is not strange to find that they rebelled. In New York a terrible riot took place. Men in Boston prepared to resist. On July 13, 1863, a meeting at St. Mary's Institute ended with cheers for Jeff Davis.²⁴ The next day, when draft notices were served, two assistant provost marshals were assaulted. The Cooper Street armory was attacked. The artillerymen stationed in the building fired on the mob, killing some and injuring others. A mob in Dock Square was dispersed without any serious difficulty.²⁵

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, May 4, 1861.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, April 27, 1861.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, June 8, 1861.

²¹ *Ibid.*, April 26, 1862.

²² *Ibid.*, Aug. 16, 1862.

²³ Samuel Eliot Morison and Henry Steele Commager, *The Growth of the American Republic* (New York, 1937), I, 601.

²⁴ *Memoranda*, July 14, 1863.

²⁵ Winsor, *The Memorial History of Boston*, III, 269 *et seq.*; *Boston Daily Advertiser*, July 15, 16, 1863; *Boston Evening Transcript*, July 15, 1863; *Boston Journal*, July 15, 1863.

The next day there was no disturbance, but rumors were heard of rioters who were to invade the city from suburban towns.²⁶ On July 16th Father Robert W. Brady, S.J., of St. Mary's Church, broke up a gathering in the North End.²⁷

At this time Bishop Fitzpatrick was not in Boston. Father Healy, the Chancellor, wrote a letter directing the priests of the Boston churches to exhort the people to accept the draft with good grace. When the Cooper Street riot was quelled, he withheld the letter. But on July 18th the Mayor asked the Chancellor to request the clergy's aid in stopping further manifestations of hostility. The letter was then sent to the churches in the disturbed part of the city, and was read at the Sunday Masses.²⁸ Undoubtedly it was of very great value in preserving peace and order.

What were Bishop Fitzpatrick's views on slavery and the War? Most of the sources relating to his career give no clue to his position. The *Catholic Observer*, however, which reflected his opinion, assisted in a campaign to purchase the freedom of a slave girl.²⁹ And the Bishop had in the Diocese two priests with negro blood in their veins — Fathers James and Sherwood Healy. They were the sons of an Irish father and a mulatto mother.³⁰ By law they were negroes, and, as a matter of fact, their ancestry was readily recognizable. These two priests were extremely intimate with the Bishop. Father James Healy was, with the exception of Father John Williams, the Bishop's closest friend. He was his Secretary and Chancellor. On him the Bishop depended to such an extent that he told his brother Patrick, a Jesuit: "I have no one who could do what he does for me . . ." ³¹ Now there were many people in Massachusetts who protested against slavery, but there were few who would employ a person of negro ancestry in a highly

²⁶ Father Hilary Tucker's *Diary*, July 15, 1863 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

²⁷ *Memoranda*, July 16, 1863. ²⁸ *Ibid.*, July 15, 18, 1863.

²⁹ *Catholic Observer*, March 29, 1849.

³⁰ Most Rev. Richard J. Cushing, D.D., *Native Clergy are the Pillars of the Church* (Boston, n.d.), pp. 27-28.

³¹ Bishop Fitzpatrick to Rev. Patrick Healy, S.J., June 16, 1864 (*Georgetown Coll. Arch.*, 135 9).

confidential capacity. Bishop Fitzpatrick was not one of them. He never stepped into the brawling arena of Abolitionism, but he showed by his actions what he thought of the treatment received by negroes in this country. To him it appeared that there should be real and not theoretical equality for all men. The accidents of birth should not be allowed to prejudice a man's career.

As for the war, Bishop Fitzpatrick was definitely a strong pro-Union sympathizer. When the conflict started, Governor Andrew sent to President Lincoln a letter from the Bishop. The text is not available, but apparently it was a request that Massachusetts should be allowed to raise more regiments for the defense of the Union, and that a new Irish regiment (besides the Ninth Regiment) should be amongst these.³²

In 1862 Bishop Fitzpatrick went to Europe for rest. Journeying from one country to another he constantly sought to convert those with whom he came in contact to the Union side. Writing to his intimate friend, Senator Charles Sumner, he declared:

I regret to say that almost everywhere in my travels I have found the public judgment most provokingly forestalled by a vast and universal system of lying in regard to our cause, and the public feeling often hostile, always at least unfriendly.³³

Only in Belgium did the Bishop find a friendly atmosphere:

The last month and a half I spent in Belgium. There I discovered a very different state of things. In that country we have a host of friends in all classes and ranks of society and a press almost united and strenuous in our favor. I know but one newspaper in either language which forms exception, and the venom has been taken out of this one.³⁴

³² The letter cannot be found in the National Archives. It may be in the *Lincoln Papers*, which are not available at this time. Reference to the letter will be found in William Schouler, *A History of Massachusetts in the Civil War* (Boston, 1868), pp. 29 ff.

³³ Bishop Fitzpatrick to Senator Sumner, Jan. 10, 1863 (*Sumner Papers, Harvard Univ. Arch.*).

³⁴ *Ibid.*

This favorable attitude of the Belgians to the Union cause was due, the Bishop found, to the skill, influence, and energy of the United States Minister at Brussels, Mr. H. S. Sanford:

Our country [the Bishop wrote], I am sure, has not a more loving son nor a more efficient servant. I had every opportunity of observing minutely his conduct whilst I was at Brussels, and it was evident to me that his country's welfare is at all times and in all things uppermost in his mind.³⁵

But it was not only Sanford who was winning the Belgians to the Union cause; Bishop Fitzpatrick's help was of utmost importance to Sanford in gaining support. Sanford informed the Secretary of State, William H. Seward:

Bishop Fitzpatrick of Boston is with me—I have brought him at my table in relation with the most prominent members of the Government, of the Court and society. In this ultra Catholic community the dicta of a high church functionary touching our war, its causes and bearings, have great weight. He has done us much good in strengthening our cause with that class which has been most prejudiced against us.³⁶

III

The call to arms was answered readily by the Irish. They were devoted to lawfully established government, and they revolted against any attempt to destroy or alter that of their adopted country.³⁷ They had opposed the Abolitionists because they believed Garrison and his followers would destroy the Union to obtain success for their cause. They had been taught by their Church that adherence to law and respect for authority were a matter of conscience. They knew that one wrong could not be swept away by another unlawful act. And, despite the opposition to them, they had grown to love the United States. It gave them a voice in the selection of governmental

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ H. S. Sanford to W. H. Seward, Jan. 16, 1863 (*Dept. of State Arch., Despatches, Belgium*, vol. 6, May 12, 1862 to May 28, 1863).

³⁷ Handlin, *Boston's Immigrants*, p. 217.

officials. Their children had the right to acquire all the education they desired. Their economic condition was measurably better than what they had had under English rule. Many had set their foot on the first rung of the ladder to material comfort. There was a strong hope and promise for the future of their children. So when the South broke the Union, they felt that all that they had come to love and cherish was threatened, and they rose up, protested, and willingly seized the arms that were offered to them. For some the step from civil to military life was made more attractive because England's sympathies were with the South. Indeed, *The Pilot* used the ancient enmity to gather recruits, and Father Finotti hoped that they would join the Fenians when the war was over.³⁸ Undoubtedly, a few were using their membership in the armed forces to perfect themselves in the art of warfare, hoping to gain valuable experience for a future attempt to break England's hold on Ireland. One doubts, however, that their number was very large. It was only an occasional individual who would risk his life to obtain a skill to be used for such a purpose.

Some of Boston's Irishmen were not unfamiliar with the duties of a soldier. They had had experience in the disbanded militia companies, and Thomas Cass had been training a number of the members of the Columbian Literary Association. Early in 1860 fifty of the Columbians had bought rifles and equipment and formed what was actually a military company, although it had no official status.³⁹

When the conflict started, Cass began to organize an Irish regiment. The Columbians formed the nucleus.⁴⁰ At the same time Dr. J. V. C. Smith and others began to raise another Irish regiment. Both of these regiments were to serve for three months. While enlistments were still being secured, word came from Washington that no more three months' regiments were wanted. Many of the volunteers in both organizations were willing, it was found, to enlist for three years, and both regiments were ordered to Long Island until their ranks had been filled and they had been accepted by the Government. There

³⁸ *Pilot*, July 26, 1862.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, May 5, 1860.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, June 24, 1865.

was some delay after this, but Massachusetts was finally told to raise six regiments. Governor Andrew decided that one of these should be Irish. He proposed to organize this regiment by filling the ranks of Cass's regiment with men drawn from the second incomplete regiment. This caused some difficulty, but enough men were finally secured and the regiment was mustered in as the Ninth Regiment, Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry.⁴¹ The remnants of the other regiment were disbanded. Bishop Fitzpatrick's letter to President Lincoln, already mentioned, probably contained a request that this Irish regiment should be accepted also.

The Ninth Regiment came up to Boston on June 24, 1861, and marched to the State House, where it was received by the Governor and presented with an American flag. There is a commemorative tablet in Boston Common depicting this presentation. It shows the Bishop standing with the Governor to review the regiment. The next day the men left for Washington. In addition to the national and state flags, the emerald green floated over their ranks. This flag was given to the Ninth by Mrs. Harrison Gray Otis. On one side were these words:

As aliens and strangers thou didst us befriend;
As sons and true patriots we do thee defend.⁴²

The Ninth Regiment fought gallantly through the Peninsular campaign, saving Porter's Fifth Corps from serious loss at the Battle of Hanover Court House, and earning for itself the name "Fighting Ninth." At Gaines' Mill and Malvern Hill it lost one hundred and eleven officers and men. Colonel Cass, who might have justly remained away from the engagements because of sickness, was mortally wounded at Malvern Hill. The year 1863 was a comparatively quiet period for the Ninth. But in 1864 it was once more fully engaged in the Wilderness campaign, where it sustained heavy losses on the Orange Turnpike and at Spottsylvania.

On June 10, 1864, the Ninth's enlistment period expired.

⁴¹ Schouler, *A History of Massachusetts in the Civil War*, pp. 210 ff.

⁴² *Boston Post*, May 31, 1936.

Recruits and men who were willing to re-enlist were transferred to the Thirty-Second Regiment, Massachusetts Veteran Volunteers. The remainder were sent home, arriving in Boston on June 15th.⁴³

It is not without interest to note that the Columbian Literary Association, which formed a link between the ancient Columbian Artillery and the Ninth Regiment, also organized a militia company within the State known as the Columbian Guard in June, 1865. To it was given all the military equipment accumulated by the Association, including "the green flag of Ireland which were [*sic*] presented to the Columbians by the ladies of Boston." This probably was the green flag carried into battle by the Ninth Regiment. The Columbian Literary Association was then disbanded.⁴⁴

Massachusetts, after some delay, received permission to raise another Irish regiment, and the Twenty-Eighth Regiment, Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, was organized.⁴⁵ The recruits were mustered into service on December 13, 1861. They also marched under the emerald green, carrying a most elaborate banner on which appeared the harp and the words *Fag au Bealac* (Clear the road). It was presented to the regiment by the City of Boston.⁴⁶

The soldiers of the Twenty-Eighth fought many a battle for the Union. In fact, the regiment's battle record is far longer than that of the Ninth. There were James Island, the engagement near the railroad embankment during the second Bull Run campaign, Antietam, Marye's Heights at Fredericksburg, Gettysburg, the Wilderness, and the Petersburg front, to mention some of the more famous engagements and campaigns.⁴⁷

⁴³ The Battle of Hanover Court House is well described in an article by John T. Brady in the *Boston Post*, *loc. cit.* The fortunes of the Ninth can be followed in *The Pilot. Massachusetts Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines in the Civil War* (Norwood, 1931), I, 616, contains a very succinct but useful history. The best source, of course, is *War of the Rebellion, Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (130 vols.).

⁴⁴ *Pilot*, June 24, 1865.

⁴⁵ Schouler, *History of Massachusetts in the Civil War*, pp. 255-279.

⁴⁶ *Pilot*, Jan. 18, 1862.

⁴⁷ *The Pilot* carried many accounts of the regiment's activities. See also *Massachusetts Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines in the Civil War*, III, 188, and *War of the Rebellion, Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*.

Three Boston priests served as chaplains in the Civil War, Fathers Nicholas O'Brien, Lawrence McMahon, and Thomas Scully. Father O'Brien served with the Twenty-Eighth Regiment until May 5, 1862.⁴⁸ His place was taken by Father McMahon, who resigned his commission and was discharged, May 30, 1863.⁴⁹ Father Scully went with the Ninth Regiment. He was captured the day after the Battle of Gaines' Mill, having been left behind at Savage Station because of sickness.⁵⁰ He was released on parole, and was discharged because of disability on October 31, 1862. Father Egan, of Washington, D.C., succeeded him.⁵¹

The Civil War raised some difficulties in regard to the religious rights of soldiers and sailors. In February, 1860, Bishop Fitzpatrick had to protest to the Secretary of the Navy because Catholic sailors, stationed at the Boston Navy Yard, were required to attend non-Catholic services.⁵² He received in reply a letter from Dr. William Whelan, Chief of the Medical and Surgical Bureau, informing him that Secretary Toucey would issue an order granting the sailors at the Boston Navy Yard the right to attend their own religious services, and would also issue general orders exempting Navy personnel from attending services on board ship, if the service was opposed to their religious principles.⁵³ Later a letter also came from Secretary Toucey informing the Bishop that he had issued the promised order and had also made it clear that all sailors were to be allowed religious freedom at all times.⁵⁴

Patrick Donahoe made a similar complaint to Governor Andrew. He protested that the religious freedom of soldiers was being restricted in one of the camps. The Governor promptly communicated with one of the officers concerned, and urged that whenever it was possible, soldiers should be permitted to attend their own church.⁵⁵

⁴⁸ *Massachusetts Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines*, III, 190.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* ⁵⁰ *Pilot*, Aug. 2, 1862.

⁵¹ *Massachusetts Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines*, I, 617.

⁵² Bishop Fitzpatrick to Isaac Toucey, Secretary of the Navy, Feb. 9, 1860 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*); *Memoranda*, Feb. 9, 1860.

⁵³ *Memoranda*, Feb. 18, 1860.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, Feb. 24, 1860. ⁵⁵ *Pilot*, Sept. 28, 1861.

IV

Although much still remains to be said in this account of the Diocese of Boston, a very definite section has been finished. It has been concerned with the great Irish immigration of the late eighteen-forties and the fifties. This migration has been considered from the point of view of both the Church and the natives who lived within the confines of the Diocese. For the Church it offered no difficulties, except those that would in any case be involved in a great expansion. For a number of the natives it presented a tremendous problem. This problem can be reduced to two points. It was Irish. It was Catholic.

The racial conflict arose from the fact that much of the background of those who dwelt in the section was English. The natives instinctively opposed the Irish, who were members of a race that had been subject to England for centuries and had always fought that subjection with every weapon it could command. Nor did interest in that struggle cease when the Irish came to dwell in this land. Among the motives that cause serious unrest amongst men is that of racial antipathy. It did its work here, as it has in so many other instances.

To this was added the conflict of religious beliefs. This was most important. There was in the Diocese a long tradition of hostility to Catholicism. Nowhere else in the nation was it so strong. It came with the first settlers. Those who followed them had been bred in this tradition. It had been deliberately cultured and fostered. Now this despised, hated — yes, even feared — Church was growing, developing, and expanding. Wherever men looked they saw that Romanism was not dying; it was getting stronger and stronger. A clash was inevitable. This was especially true of the lower classes. Here narrow contacts and limited experience did not serve to breed tolerance. For these people especially, Romanism, saturated with corruption and expressive of everything inimical to democracy, was engulfing the region. Conflict could not be avoided.

Take racial prejudice. Add to it religious hostility. Weigh in the ingredients supplied by skillful propagandists. There

you have everything necessary for a collision. And this antagonism appeared everywhere — in the legislative chamber, in schools, in public institutions, in business, in daily associations. A line of cleavage was established which even today has not been wholly demolished. It was drawn by the hand of prejudice. It should never have been traced, because this nation is a democracy. But even the concept of democracy has had to develop. This is especially true where religion is concerned. We know that even between non-Catholic denominations there were disputes and legal difficulties after the Republic had been founded. Those difficulties were surmounted over a period of time. For the Church, however, the process was much longer and occasioned sharper controversy. It took patience, tact, and forbearance to overcome bigotry.

During the period of Bishop Fitzpatrick's administration, anti-Catholicism could have been much more vigorous and destructive than it actually was. One reason for this was that the Irish, led by their Bishop, in most cases refused to fight against the tide. They allowed the wave of prejudice to thunder in, but carefully stood back upon the shore away from its reach. It burst with a roar, it swept upon them, but then its strength was spent, and it lapped harmlessly against the position they had taken. But if the Church had plunged in to oppose it, there would have been a different result. Then the wave would have been met in that foaming swirl where the swell rears and breaks. Then two strong forces would have pitted their strength against each other. Then great destruction would certainly have followed.

That entire justice may be done, let it be set down that there were many non-Catholics in the Diocese who were not deluded and misled by vicious tradition and propaganda. They were honest, just, and Christian men. They aided the Church in the struggle. They deterred bigots by their example. They refuted lies. They insisted that the peace of the community should not be disturbed. The influence of their conduct must be considered also when assessing anti-Catholicism. This moderating influence was there, and it was powerful. It was of the utmost

value to the Diocese. The intolerance that was displayed by many must not be allowed to overshadow the tolerance that did exist.

Know-Nothingism spent itself in futile efforts. The Catholic policy of restraint gained the day. By 1859 the results could be seen. Writing to Archbishop Purcell, Bishop Fitzpatrick declared:

I have many things to tell you and to show you here which will make you think better of the Yankees and convince you that we are readily and even rapidly gaining ground amongst them. The anti-Catholic scale of the balance only just touches ground now and I feel sure that before many years it will get a hoist that will make it kick the beam.⁵⁶

Then came the Civil War. Massachusetts found that her Irish Catholics could be patriots. They saw them in the camps. They cheered them as they marched through the streets. They read the reports of their devotion to duty on the battlefield. And the gates of prejudice in many a mind were slowly pushed back, and tolerance entered. Even the *Atlas and Bee*, an old and bitter enemy of the Irish, was persuaded to admit that, although the Irish were clannish, they rallied to the public defense when danger threatened.⁵⁷ Men on the battlefield, and in camp also, learned to understand and respect their Irish comrades. And they brought that lesson home with them and its spirit influenced the communities where they lived. In this way the true meaning of liberty and democracy was more clearly revealed, and a more tolerant and united Nation was developed.

⁵⁶ Bishop Fitzpatrick to Archbishop Purcell, Aug. 20, 1859 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

⁵⁷ *Pilot*, July 6, 1861.

CHAPTER XV

VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE PERIOD

I

IN THE HISTORY OF ANY DIOCESE the lives and accomplishments of the majority of priests must remain unrecorded. This happens, not because they have achieved nothing worthy of note, but because the story of their careers is not set down in parish records. Thus, it happens that the historian is painfully aware that many priests do not receive the tribute of praise that is rightfully theirs. In writing these pages a real effort was made to avoid this, nevertheless the defect is there. Perhaps it can be obviated to a small extent by describing briefly the life of the priests of these pioneer days.

A priest's life in those days can be summed up in one word — it was that of a missionary. Knowing what that term implies gives one a correct picture. Strange as it may sound today, this was a missionary country, and mission societies in Europe were contributing to the support of the Church. If a priest was assigned to a city or a large town, it could be taken for granted that he would never have a sufficient number of fellow laborers to care conveniently for the congregation. Even if there were two or more churches, his work would not in many cases be confined to the relatively small limits of a regularly defined parish. Many large towns and cities did not have parish lines. That meant that a priest's sick calls would come from any and every part of the district. That was also the case with any other matters that required personal attention and visitations. Moreover, his church might have widely scattered missions and stations attached to it. These had to receive regular care. All this meant that the priests were constantly on duty. There were few periods of rest, and very few vacations. Many men received no relief from their labors until sickness forced them to stop.

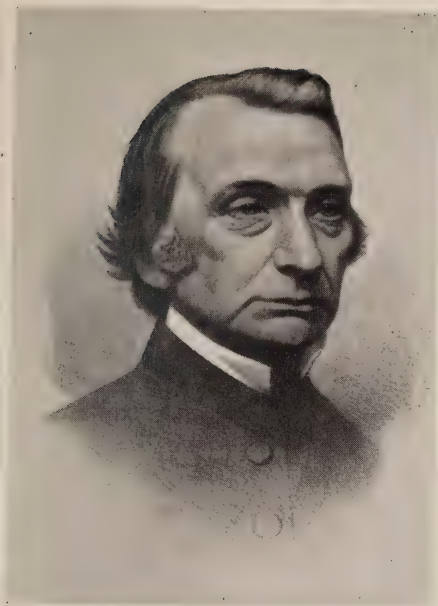
Boston priests were especially hard-pressed. They had the awful difficulties of cholera plagues to contend with. Often it was necessary for them to journey to some distant town, to say Mass, attend a dying person, or aid a priest who was sick.

In the country, a priest passed from point to point saying Mass in one town on Sunday, in another on Monday, and so through the week, making the circuit of stations and missions. A few priests followed the railroad laborers from one encampment to another. Services might be held in some humble house, in a barn, in a railroad worker's shanty, or in the open. In some places priests would not be welcome. They were subjected to abuse, and could scarcely obtain a night's lodging. Their long missionary journeys were made by any and every means, on foot, by railroad, by carriage, on horseback, and by boat. A priest who was assigned to the country generally had no assistants. Sometimes he was sent to take charge of a mission immediately after his ordination, and had to contend with the problems that arose from lack of experience.

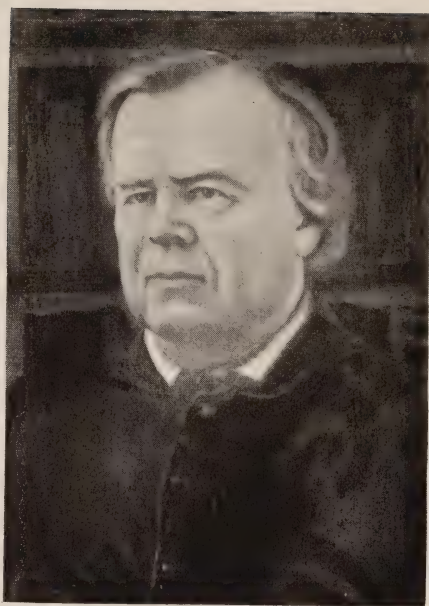
The priests of that day did their work well. They carefully tended the magnificent faith that the Irish people brought from Ireland. They taught generations of children to cherish their spiritual heritage. They eased the blows that inevitably came to a people who were adjusting themselves to a new way of life. They were laying the foundations of a diocese, and they brought to the task the skill, patience, and love of true priests. There was no poor work in the base that they laid. It was sound, true, level, and strong.

II

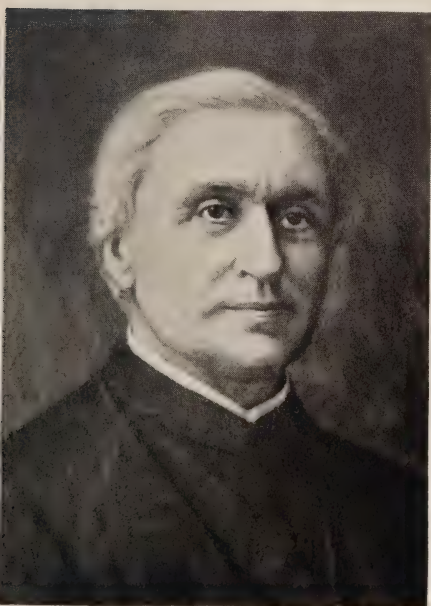
An account of the Fitzpatrick period is likely to give a distorted view of the relations that existed between the Church and non-Catholics, because of the anti-Catholic movements that characterized those days. The impact between the two forces was so great, and the opportunities to describe their various ramifications are so attractive, that there is a great temptation to concentrate on these almost exclusively. Yet to do this



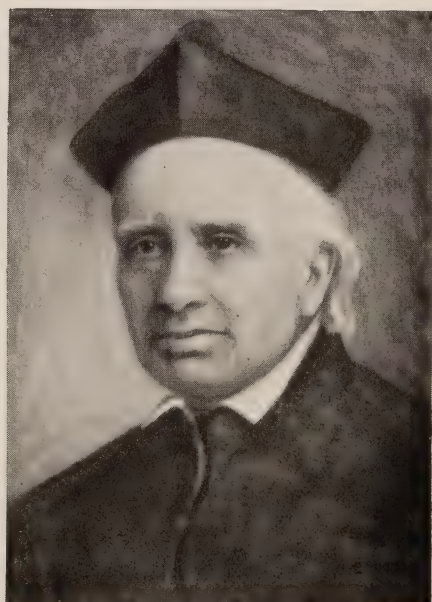
FATHER GEORGE HASKINS



FATHER JAMES FITTON



FATHER JOHN BAPST, S.J.



FATHER JOHN MCELROY, S.J.

would be both unfair and a distortion of the true situation, since there were many non-Catholics who were truly liberal and democratic and always displayed a kindly interest in the affairs of the Church.

In a general way, this broad and liberal non-Catholic attitude can be demonstrated by the long list of names that were signed to the second petition of Holy Cross College for a charter, or the repeated efforts made by Protestants to induce the General Court to indemnify the Diocese for the destruction of the Charlestown Convent. The cordial relations that existed between the Bishop and the Thursday Evening Club is another sign of the lack of hostility in certain circles. It must be remembered that Catholic charitable organizations received generous support from non-Catholics — St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum was one case, the Eliot Charity School another.

To come to more specific instances, it can be mentioned that, during the erection of the Fitchburg church in 1848, many Protestants contributed generously to the building fund. At Winchendon, the people in a town meeting voted to give land to the Catholics for a burying ground; and that in a day when Catholic cemeteries were not popular! It was William Edwards, a Protestant, who gave the land for the church in Southbridge; and at Leicester the fine story is told of a kindly and beloved old Congregationalist minister, the Rev. John Nelson, who greatly encouraged the Catholic people in their endeavors to erect a church and was aided in his endeavors by other Protestants of the town. Bishop Fitzpatrick himself described at length in his *Memoranda* the aid given to the church in Blackstone by the mill-owner, William Farnum. He considered Farnum to be the chief founder of the church there, since he bought the land and gave a great deal of money toward its construction. This was no selfish act on Farnum's part in order to keep his laborers, since they had already been in his mill for some years. When St. Mary's Church in Waltham was burned, the selectmen offered a reward of two hundred dollars for the apprehension of the incendiary and the use of the Town Hall for services, free of charge. The authorities at Milford, under

pressure, withdrew a permit the Catholics had to use the Town Hall for services, but the more liberal Protestants immediately protested and forced a restoration of the permit. Funds for the church in Augusta, Maine, were generously increased by donations from the Governor, President of the Senate, Speaker of the House, and many members of the Legislature.

These facts, together with those mentioned in the course of this narrative, should be taken into consideration in arriving at any sort of a balanced judgment of the times. There was a narrow, bigoted element that hated and despised the Church, but a tolerant and fair-minded group also did exist. In the midst of the noise raised by Nativists and Know-Nothings the sound of their efforts was drowned out to a great extent, but it nevertheless was there and should be given recognition.

III

There were also Protestants in the Diocese who were attracted to the Church. Many were of humble circumstances, and the only record that now survives of their conversion is a simple note in some parish archive. Others were of more prominence, and the history of their spiritual journey to Rome has been preserved.

Nathaniel Shurtleff was a son of one of Boston's first families. His father was Mayor of Boston from 1868 to 1870, and at one time was allied with the Know-Nothings. The story of Father John Bapst's sufferings at Ellsworth, Maine, inspired him to investigate the Catholic Church. His family was greatly distressed, but the young man persisted, and finally made his profession of faith. In July, 1860, he entered the Jesuit novitiate. But when the Civil War began, the desire to defend his country was so overwhelming that he left the novitiate and entered one of the Massachusetts regiments as a captain.¹ He was mortally wounded in battle.

One of the Bishop's dearest friends was Samuel P. Tuckerman. He became a Catholic in 1854. For fifty-four years he

¹"Father John Bapst, A Sketch" (*Woodstock Letters*, XX, 63-64).

was a familiar figure in the Cathedral choir. To the Church also came George M. Searle, Harvard graduate, and an astronomer of recognized ability. Before he began to study the Faith, the Church appeared to him to be "an old fossil, teaching, if it taught anything, some false doctrines which modern enlightenment had long ago exploded."² Searle became one of the members of the Harvard Observatory staff, and was Assistant Professor of Astronomy at Harvard (1866-1868). Finding it inconvenient to attend the Church of the Advent, he joined an Episcopal church in the town where he resided. The services did not satisfy him. Then by chance he read the *Catechism of the Council of Trent*. This set him on the road to Rome. He began to read controversial works. For sixteen months he debated with himself and with non-Catholic clergymen. Finally, he brought his difficulties to a priest. This priest, he said later, "by his instructions, [and] his answers to my questions, did more good than all the books he could have furnished."³ Searle was baptized conditionally on the Feast of the Assumption, 1862. Six years later he entered the seminary of the Congregation of St. Paul the Apostle, and was ordained a priest in 1871. Father Searle taught for some years in the Paulist seminary and later at the Catholic University. He was elected Superior General of his congregation in 1904.⁴ The last years of his life were spent as director of the Vatican Observatory.⁵ Father Searle wrote *Plain Facts for Fair Minds*, one of the most popular books of Catholic apologetics in its day.

Emma Forbes Cary, whose sister, Mrs. Alexander Agassiz, was the foundress of Radcliffe College, received her first introduction to the Church from a young Irish girl, Harriet Ryan, who was her hairdresser. Miss Cary discovered in Harriet Ryan a faith and love of God far greater than anything she had ever experienced. They became close friends, and Miss Ryan finally sent Miss Cary to Bishop Fitzpatrick, who instructed her, and received her into the Church on October 4, 1855. For the rest of her life, although she lived in a social world that was over-

² Curtis, *Some Roads to Rome*, p. 365.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 374.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 363.

⁵ *Commonwealth History of Massachusetts*, V, 535.

whelmingly Protestant, she remained the staunchest of Catholics. For twenty-five years she was a member of the Massachusetts Prison Committee, and won high distinction by her work in behalf of prisoners. Miss Cary devoted much time to writing for Catholic periodicals, and compiled a fine devotional volume, *The Day-Spring from on 'High*.⁶

Other converts were McBurney, editor of *The Pilot*, and Miss Higginson, niece of the Rev. William E. Channing. Judge Metcalf, of the Massachusetts Supreme Court, advised his two grandsons to join the Church.⁷ One of them, Theodore Metcalf, later became a priest, and was one of the foremost members of the diocesan clergy in the time of Archbishop Williams. Judge Metcalf's wife also became a Catholic, but the Judge, despite his great respect for the Church, never entered the Fold. And there were Francis Blake, a Boston merchant, Miss Thorndike, who married the Spanish Ambassador Señor Calderon de la Barca,⁸ Dr. Thomas Dwight, the famous anatomist, and his mother, Mrs. Thomas Dwight. Charles F. Browne, more familiarly known as Artemus Ward, the humorist, can be mentioned, since he was born in Waterford, Maine, in 1834. His conversion took place shortly before his death in London in 1867. General Joseph Warren Revere, grandson of Paul Revere, made the spiritual journey to Rome. General Amiel W. Whipple, of Greenwich, Massachusetts, was a convert. He was a military engineer, who helped to fix both our Canadian and Mexican boundaries. During the Civil War he was chief topographical engineer under General McClellan. General Whipple was mortally wounded in the battle of Chancellorsville. From a stern Congregationalist family came Richard Storrs Willis. His father, Nathaniel Willis, was a deacon of Park Street Church and the founder of the Congregationalist weekly, *The Recorder*, which in early times so often flayed the Catholics. Richard Willis was a Yale graduate, poet, scholar, musical critic, and in later life he was for many years editor of *The*

⁶ See the fine tribute paid to her by His Eminence, William Cardinal O'Connell, "A Life Lived for God" in his *Sermons and Addresses* (Boston, 1922), VI, 122-129.

⁷ *Memoranda*, Oct. 20, 1846.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Oct. 12, 1846.

Musical World. Thomas Gill, for twenty years the principal reporter of the *Boston Post* and then Registrar of Probate for Suffolk County, entered the Church. One of the foremost physicians of Boston, Dr. Richard H. Salter, became a Catholic. Dr. Salter was one of the founders of the Church of the Advent. His wife, a daughter of the Rev. Dr. Woods, of Andover Theological Seminary, also was a convert. Mention should be made of a resident of Ellsworth, Maine, Mary Agnes Tincker, who in her day won some fame as a novelist.

One of the most interesting converts of the period was Charles Bullard Fairbanks. He grew up as a relatively poor youth, who worked in a bookstore, and then as an assistant librarian at the Athenaeum. He also wrote essays and special articles for the Boston newspapers, which at an early age made him a celebrity. Religiously, he passed from Unitarianism to the Episcopal Church, and from there to Catholicism, which he adopted in 1852. Desirous of being a priest, he matriculated at Holy Cross College in 1855. He did not stay long in Worcester, but went to Paris to study for Orders. Unfortunately, however, even at the time when he was at Holy Cross College he was in acute ill-health and the strain of his studies in Paris only aggravated his condition. He was forced to leave the seminary. He died in Paris. As an author Charles Fairbanks ranged over a wide field, producing charming sketches and essays. Everything he wrote showed the influence of a highly cultivated mind, inspired by genius and religious ardor. His chief works were *My Unknown Chum* (1859), written under his favorite pseudonym, *Aguecheek*, and *Memorials of the Blessed: Short Lives of the Saints* (1860).⁹

Orestes Brownson's conversion belongs quite properly in the history of Bishop Fenwick's episcopate. Since, however, he was for many years closely associated with Bishop Fitzpatrick, it is necessary to discuss this relationship here.

For some time after Brownson had met Bishop Fitzpatrick there was a definite barrier between the two men. Brownson himself says that the Bishop received him civilly, but with

⁹ Michael Earls, S.J., *Manuscripts and Memories* (Milwaukee, 1935), pp. 125-136.

some distrust. Bishop Fitzpatrick, he claimed, was "a little prejudiced" against him, and "doubted the motives which led so proud and so conceited a man, as he regarded me, to seek admission into the Communion of the Church."¹⁰ The source of this distrust is to be traced both to the Bishop and to Brownson.

Bishop Fitzpatrick must have known that for years Brownson had been a religious wanderer — so much so that even his friends called him the "Weathervane." Now he had come to Rome. But, the Bishop must have asked himself, will he stay in Rome or will he soon stray away? This was a matter of prime importance. Brownson was one of the foremost figures on the American religious scene. His entrance into the Church would cause much commotion. If, after a time, he fell away, that, too, would be a sensation and might do much harm.

Moreover — and this is most important — even after the two men had known each other for some weeks, and the Bishop had had plenty of time to become assured of Brownson's sincerity, the convert deliberately caused a misunderstanding. It will be recalled that Brownson was brought to the Church by his doctrine of communion. Now for some reason or other (Brownson does not reveal the cause), the prospective convert feared that the Bishop would reject the doctrine. If that happened, then he felt that the Bishop would have deprived him of all reason for becoming a Catholic, and he would be cast adrift once more. The Bishop detected this want of frankness, and two or three months passed before Brownson and the Bishop came to an understanding. The difficulty was finally removed when, as Brownson relates, ". . . I soon discovered that there was another method, by which, even waiving the one which I had thus far followed, I could arrive at the authority of the Church, and prove, even in a clearer and more direct manner, her divine commission to teach all men and nations in all things pertaining to eternal salvation. This new process or method I found was as satisfactory to reason as my own."¹¹

¹⁰ Orestes A. Brownson, *The Convert; or, Leaves from My Experience* (New York, 1877), p. 282.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 282-283.

But would the Bishop have rejected Brownson's doctrine so completely that Brownson would have been driven away from the Church? A historian of the Bishop's life must admit that he can find no direct evidence in any sources relating to the Bishop which throws light on the question, but a conclusion can be drawn from a similar case, and it seems legitimate to do so.

Isaac Hecker, founder of the Missionary Society of St. Paul the Apostle, made his way to the Church by his own philosophical speculations. He knew Bishop Fitzpatrick, and before his conversion, explained his investigations to him. The Bishop was delighted, and wrote to Bishop McCloskey concerning Father Hecker:

... after a long and somewhat painful investigation, in which he had no human guide, but only the Spirit of God, he has arrived at the full conviction that the Catholic Church has infallible and divine authority to lead him and that in obeying her he obeys God. This conviction is in him thorough and practical and he stops not at any of the consequences.¹²

Now if the Bishop felt this way about Hecker's struggles to attain the truth, is it not reasonable to suppose that his attitude would have been the same toward Brownson? Yes, he would have looked for errors in the doctrine, that would have been his duty, but he would not have rejected what was true. And he certainly would never have been so cruel as to drive Brownson away. Perhaps Brownson was too timid — or proud.

During the months that preceded Brownson's conversion, he had been developing in his *Review* the doctrine that brought him to Catholicism. These articles attracted wide notice amongst Protestants as well as Catholics. In fact he had secured the attention of a great number of non-Catholic disciples who were seeking a way to Divine Truth. Much to their distress, however, in the first issue of the *Review* which he published

¹² Bishop Fitzpatrick to Bishop McCloskey, June 17, 1844 (*New York Dioc. Arch.*, A 22). I believe that this letter throws an entirely new light on the Bishop's relations with Father Hecker, as they are described by Father Hecker in "Dr. Brownson and Bishop Fitzpatrick," *The Catholic World*, XLV (1887), 1 *et seq.*

after he became a Catholic, Brownson made no mention of these doctrines, but defended his conversion on grounds which were wholly unrelated to his previous expositions. This caused many of his followers to turn "away in disgust." They refused to concern themselves any longer with the man. He appeared to be unreliable and to act irrationally. Biographers of Brownson claim that Bishop Fitzpatrick was responsible for this abrupt change in Brownson's doctrines. They say that the Bishop made a bad mistake in doing this, for if Brownson had been allowed to develop his philosophy, many of his disciples would have followed him into the Church. But Brownson distinctly declares that he made this abrupt change himself. To prove this it is necessary to turn to Brownson's history of his conversion and quote rather extensively from it.

In *The Convert*, after discussing his reluctance to reveal to Bishop Fitzpatrick the philosophy which caused him to seek admission to the Catholic Church, Brownson says that he found the Church's divine commission to teach all men as satisfactory as his own doctrine of communion and, therefore, "I dropped for the time the doctrine of life . . ." ¹³ He then goes on to relate:

As I did not make use in the last moment of my doctrine of communion, and as I had no occasion for it afterwards for my own mind, I made no further use of it; and when I addressed the public again, proceeded to defend my Catholic faith by the method ordinarily adopted by Catholic writers. I did this, because, seeing the Catholic Church and her dogmas to be infinitely more than that doctrine had enabled me to conceive, I attached for the moment no great importance to it. It certainly was not all that I had supposed it, and it might prove to be nothing at all. It had served as a scaffolding, but now the temple was completed, it might serve only to obscure its beauty and fair proportions. At any rate, that and all other philosophical theories which I had formed while yet unacquainted with the Church, should be suffered to sleep, till I had time and opportunity to reëxamine them in the light of Catholic faith and theology. It did not comport with the

¹³ *The Convert*, pp. 285-286.

modesty and humility of a recent convert to be intruding theories of his own upon the Catholic public, or to insist on methods of defending Catholic doctrine, adopted while he was a non-Catholic, and not recognized by Catholic theologians. Was it likely I had discovered anything of value that had escaped the great theologians and doctors of the Church? ¹⁴

Certainly Brownson could not have been any more definite in stating why the doctrine of communion was not used by him. He clearly says that this was a decision of his own. But to develop the point more at length, let Brownson describe what the effect was on his non-Catholic followers:

But this suppression of my own philosophical theory, — a suppression under every view commendable, and even necessary at the time, became the occasion of my being placed in a false position towards my non-Catholic friends. Many had read me, seen well enough whither I was tending, and were not surprised to find me professing myself a Catholic. The doctrine I brought out, and which they had followed, appeared to them, as it did to me, to authorize me to do so, and perhaps not a few of them were making up their minds to follow me; but they were thrown all aback the first time they heard me speaking as a Catholic, by finding me defending my conversion on grounds of which I had given no public intimation, and which seemed to them wholly unconnected with those I had published. Unable to perceive any logical or intellectual connection between my last utterances before entering the Church and my first utterances afterwards, they looked upon my conversion, after all, as a sudden caprice, or rash act taken from a momentary impulse or in a fit of intellectual despair, for which I had in reality no good reason to offer. So they turned away in disgust, and refused to trouble themselves any longer with the reasonings of one on whom so little reliance could be placed, and who could act without any rational motive for his action.

Evidently this was unpleasant, but I could not set the matter right at the time, by showing that there really had been a continuity in my intellectual life, and that I had not broken with my former self so abruptly or so completely as they supposed.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 286-287.

Till I had had time to review my past writings in the light of my new faith, the matter was uncertain in my own mind, and it was my duty, so far as the public was concerned, to let the doctrine sleep, and to write and publish nothing but what I had a warrant for in the approved writers of the Church.¹⁵

Brownson concluded this section of *The Convert* by saying that after almost thirteen years of experience in the Catholic Church, he had decided that the doctrine was not "incompatible with any Catholic principle or dogma" and, therefore, he felt free to publish it. But — and this is important — he also said that even then he would not publish it if he was not satisfied that it was prudent to do so.

I acted prudently [when he dropped the doctrine], as it was proper I should act, and I should continue to do so, and not have written the present book (*The Convert*) and taken up the connecting link, had not nearly thirteen years of Catholic experience and study enabled me to perceive that the doctrine of life I asserted is in no way incompatible with any Catholic principle or doctrine I have become acquainted with, and that it did legitimately lead me to the Catholic Church.¹⁶

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 287-288.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 288-289. Father Isaac Hecker made the statement that Bishop Fitzpatrick caused Brownson to drop his doctrine of communion. Father Hecker's assertion has been taken up by Brownson's biographers in a manner which has reflected on Bishop Fitzpatrick. Father Hecker's charges may be found in *The Catholic World* article which I have already cited. They certainly do not agree with Brownson's statement of the reasons why the doctrine of communion was dropped. If Father Hecker's article is read carefully, it will be seen that his account of Brownson's relations with the Bishop is obviously askew. For instance, he states that the Bishop "forced" Brownson to give up his doctrine of communion, then he quotes practically the same passages from Brownson that I have quoted. At the end of these quotations he says that Brownson yielded "to the bishop's influence," and, in another place, "... he was switched off the main line of his career by the influence of Bishop Fitzpatrick." Now, there is a vast difference between being *forced* to do something and being *influenced*. Undoubtedly, the Bishop did influence Brownson by his exposition of the historical argument for the divine commission of the Church. To convince him was to influence him. But that does not mean that he forced him. What happened was that the Bishop gave his exposition, Brownson saw that it was logical, and accepted it, and then, not being sure how his doctrine would square with Catholic philosophy, he decided to drop it and use the Bishop's arguments in addressing non-Catholics. It should always be remembered, in dealing with this phase of Brownson's career, that he never discussed his doctrine of communion with the Bishop.

It was, then, Brownson himself and not the Bishop who was responsible for the decision not to use the doctrine of communion.

For some years after his conversion, Brownson continued to publish his *Review*, with Bishop Fitzpatrick as his "chief adviser."¹⁷ It was very important that the Bishop should supervise his work, since Brownson wrote frequently about theological subjects, and he needed someone to guide him. Moreover, since he was dealing with matters of faith and morals, the articles would have to be censored.¹⁸ The Diocese at that time had no official censor, and the Bishop had to fulfill this duty. This does not mean that the Bishop supervised every article written by Brownson, but only those productions which were concerned with theological subjects.¹⁹

In 1854 the Bishop went to Europe. While he was away, Brownson published an article in his *Review* on the Know-Nothing movement. He said some very harsh things about the Irish, and, as a result, was soon being criticized very severely. When Bishop Fitzpatrick returned to the Diocese in August, he found that his convert had offended a great part of the Catholic press, clergy, and hierarchy. There is no evidence to show what the Bishop's reactions were, but it can be surmised that he at least thought that Brownson had been imprudent.

In the fall of 1855, Brownson left Boston and went to New York, because, as he wrote to Father Hecker:

I think I should be with you more in the midst of friends, and I could exert far more personal influence than here. . . . This diocese is becoming more and more Irish. I think I could now get along with his Grace the Archbishop without any serious difficulty, and I think I could breast the storm still raging and likely to rage for some time against me better in New York under his patronage than here.²⁰

¹⁷ Bishop Spalding to Archbishop Purcell, July 12, 1854 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

¹⁸ Prior to the new *Code of Canon Law* which appeared in 1918, the license of the Ordinary of the place of publication was generally required (Leo XIII, const. "*Officiorum ac Munorum*," Jan. 25, 1897, W. 35 Fontes N. 632).

¹⁹ Henry F. Brownson, *Orestes A. Brownson's Middle Life: From 1845 to 1855* (Detroit, 1899), p. 388.

²⁰ Theodore Maynard, *Orestes Brownson, Yankee, Radical, Catholic* (New York, 1943), p. 240.

But within two years Brownson discovered that he had made a mistake. Instead of finding peace in New York, he was more hotly assailed than he had been in Boston. Even Archbishop Hughes had attacked him. In a revealing letter to Bishop Fitzpatrick, which has never been published before, he said:

I take this occasion to renew my assurances of my grateful recollection of all your kindness to me, the invaluable services you have rendered, your steady friendship and support for years and in confidence, my regret that I am no longer under your spiritual direction and that I ever removed from my only home. Think of me as well and kindly as you can and believe me with all my faults your grateful friend, etc.²¹

In the same year (1857) that Brownson wrote this letter, he also published *The Convert*, an account of his spiritual experiences and conversion to the Catholic Church. This book was dedicated to Bishop Fitzpatrick, and in it he paid this tribute to his former adviser:

Delicacy and his own retiring character prevent me from speaking of his successor, the present Bishop of Boston, in the terms which naturally present themselves. He was my instructor, my confessor, my spiritual director, and my personal friend, for eleven years; my intercourse with him was intimate, cordial, and affectionate, and I owe him more than it is possible for me to owe to any other man. I have met men of more various erudition and higher scientific attainments; I have met men of bolder fancy and more creative imaginations; but I have never met a man of a clearer head, a firmer intellectual grasp, a sounder judgment, or a warmer heart. He taught me my catechism and my theology; and, though I have found men who made a far greater display of theological erudition, I have never met an abler or sounder theologian. However for a moment I may have been attracted by one or another theological school, I have invariably found myself obliged to come back at last to the views he taught me. If my Review has any theological merit, if it has earned any reputation as a stanch

²¹ O. Brownson to Bishop Fitzpatrick, Feast Ascension, 1857 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

and uncompromising defender of the Catholic faith, that merit is principally due, under God, to him, to his instruction, to his advice, to his encouragement, and his uniform support. Its faults, its shortcomings, or its demerits, are my own. I know that, in saying this, I offend his modesty, his unaffected Christian humility; but less I could not say without violence to my own feelings, the deep reverence, the warm love and profound gratitude with which I always recall, and trust I always shall recall his name and his services to me.²²

This tribute to the Bishop, considered in conjunction with the letter just quoted from Brownson to the Bishop, justifies the conclusion that Brownson was attempting to apologize for any offense he may have given to the Bishop during his last years of residence in Boston.

A rift in this friendship between the Bishop and Brownson did occur in 1859. The Young Catholic Friends' Society had invited Brownson to come to Boston and deliver a lecture. But at this time Brownson was again dealing very harshly with the Irish in his *Review*, and the result was that the invitation was withdrawn. Bishop Fitzpatrick told Archbishop Purcell:

The Society is much embarrassed just now owing to a series of disappointments in relation [to] lectures. One on the part of Dr. Brownson. It had been arranged that [he] should give one lecture. But the insults which pour out so indiscriminately upon the Irish as a people, in the last number of his review, leave the Committee to think that it would be an outrage on an Irish audience to place before them such a man as a lecturer and that their indignation would manifest itself in some very unpleasant manner. I am myself of the same opinion. Dr. Brownson has therefore been notified of a withdrawal of the invitation previously tendered to him.²³

Very unfortunately, no evidence is available at this time as to whether or not this unfortunate occurrence caused a serious

²² *The Convert*, pp. 281-282.

²³ Bishop Fitzpatrick to Archbishop Purcell, Nov. 3, 1859 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

and permanent rupture in the friendship between the Bishop and his convert.²⁴

Except for Boston,²⁵ scarcely any other part of New England in these years produced so many notable converts to Catholicism as Vermont. This fact was largely due to the zeal of one man, the Rev. William Henry Hoyt: himself a convert, one of the finest figures in our Catholic history, and perhaps the most outstanding recruit that the Oxford Movement brought into the Church in New England.²⁶

He was born at Sandwich, New Hampshire, January 8, 1813. His father, General Daniel Hoyt, was a wealthy and prominent man in his community: a bank president, fifteen times elected to the State Legislature, State Senator, and repeatedly a candidate for Governor. After graduating from Dartmouth in 1831, the younger Hoyt, a year later, entered the theological seminary at Andover, Massachusetts, presumably with the intention of becoming a Congregational minister. Within a few weeks, however, a first revolution must have taken place in his religious opinions, under what influences we have no means of knowing. By November, 1832, he had applied for acceptance as a postulant for holy orders in the Episcopal Church. Kept waiting for a year, during which time he continued his studies at Andover, he was accepted by Bishop Griswold, of the "Eastern Diocese,"

²⁴ Besides the volume written by Theodore Maynard, two other biographies of Brownson have appeared in recent years: Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *Orestes A. Brownson: A Pilgrim's Progress* (Boston, 1938); Doran Whalen, *Granite for God's House: The Life of Orestes Augustine Brownson* (New York, 1941). I found that Henry F. Brownson was not very exact in his account of his father's life in Boston in the volume *Orestes A. Brownson's Middle Life*.

²⁵ This section about Vermont converts was written by R. H. Lord.

²⁶ The chief account of his life is still that by Bishop Louis de Goësbriand, *Catholic Memoirs of Vermont and New Hampshire* (Burlington, 1886), pp. 128-146. Cf. also David W. Hoyt, *A Genealogical History of the Hoyt, Haight, and Hight Families* (Providence, 1871); and Rt. Rev. John H. Hopkins, *A Pastoral Letter, Addressed by the Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the State of Vermont to the People of His Diocese, on the Subject of His Correspondence with the Rev. William Henry Hoyt, Late Rector of Union Church, St. Alban's* (Burlington, 1846). The chief source is Father Hoyt's voluminous diaries, which run from April 21, 1842, to Dec. 7, 1883 (38 volumes, with one volume of fragments). These diaries (which were used to some extent by Bishop Goësbriand) were most kindly placed at my disposal by his grandson, Mr. William Henry Hoyt, of Greenwich, Conn. (R. H. L.)

in August, 1833; and he thereupon betook himself to Burlington to learn more about his new faith as a student in the "Vermont Episcopal Institution" just started by Bishop John H. Hopkins. In 1834 he entered the General Theological Seminary in New York — a centre of High Churchmanship — where he graduated two years later. Ordained a deacon by Bishop Griswold in Boston, July 17, 1836, he served briefly under the latter's jurisdiction at Claremont, New Hampshire, but then (in the spring of 1837) transferred himself to Vermont, perhaps because he preferred the "High" tone of Episcopal circles there to the Evangelical atmosphere of the Eastern Diocese. Bishop Hopkins ordained him a presbyter (September, 1837), and appointed him rector, successively, of Middlebury and of St. Luke's Church, St. Albans, in which latter position he was to remain for eight years.²⁷

To all appearances, the young clergyman was in a most enviable situation. Full of religious fervor and devoted to the tasks of the ministry, he brought to his work a thorough education, exceptional talents, accomplishments of many kinds, a spotless character, and the utmost singleness and sincerity of purpose. Tall, robust, handsome, with a "remarkably sweet and noble countenance," and a most winning personality, he gained the enthusiastic loyalty of his people, and was soon widely known in his denomination. Ample financial means enabled him to show great generosity to the poor, to his church, and to the Bishop, who had been bankrupted by the crash of 1837. An ideally happy marriage had united the young rector since 1838 to Anne Deming, the daughter of a rich and influential family of Burlington, who was to bear him eleven children. He served as a trustee of the General Theological Seminary, was usually secretary at each Diocesan Convention, and was a delegate in 1844 to the National Convention. He had become, as Bishop Hopkins attested, "perhaps the most prominent and influential presbyter of the diocese."²⁸

²⁷ These facts about what has been a very little known part of Father Hoyt's life have been gleaned largely from the records of the Protestant Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, which were most generously made accessible to the writer.

²⁸ *Pastoral Letter*, p. 19.

From these pleasant moorings he was to be swept by the tide of Tractarianism. From the moment that the Oxford Movement began to rouse attention in this country, he seems to have become one of its most open and ardent adherents. He spared no money to procure the books, sermons, and tracts put forth by the Oxford leaders. He took up with delight the study of the Church Fathers, the lives of the Saints, the ancient liturgies, the Breviary. His dream by night was that he had the high privilege of conversing on Theology with Newman and Pusey.²⁹ While it is impossible to trace his doings in detail before the time when his diaries begin (1842), it is certain that from that time on he was exerting himself strenuously to spread what he called "my own high Catholic views of the Church itself and its ministry and Sacraments."³⁰ His congregation were edified — or alarmed — at the ever more frequent and more ceremonious celebration of what he now termed "the Eucharistic sacrifice," at the introduction of Gregorian music, at sermons read from Newman or St. Bernard. His own family circle pored over Thomas à Kempis or *The House of Loreto*. Any Methodist or Congregationalist with whom he fell into discussion was likely to be strongly admonished of "the wrong of separating from Christ's Church."

But in America, as in England, the early forties were to bring the Tractarians to the parting of the ways. On the one hand, the growing storm of Evangelical opposition might raise doubts whether "Anglo-Catholics" would any longer be tolerated within the Protestant Episcopal Church. On the other hand, with increasing clarification of the issues at stake, many of the best minds in the movement were asking whether conscience would allow them to remain any longer in that church. The excitement over the protested ordination in New York in 1843 of Rev. Arthur Carey (a kind of American George Ward), the battle between the parties at the General Convention of 1844, the forced retirement of two High Church bishops, the drastic purging from Tractarianism of the General Theological Seminary (the chief American headquarters of the movement), and an

²⁹ *Diary*, Jan. 30, 1844.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, June 7, 1843.

unprecedented number of "secessions to Rome" — such were some features of this period in the history of the Episcopal Church. In Vermont Bishop Hopkins, who had long been very favorable to the Tractarians, turned sharply against them in 1843 with four thunderous *Letters on the Novelties That Disturb Our Peace*.

Hoyt seems to have met the tempest unshaken, as far as the opposition within his own church was concerned. The followers of the Oxford Movement must not allow themselves "to be scared from faithful adherence to Catholicism," he wrote in his diary at the time of the Bishop's onslaught. "On, and that, too, with a bold, earnest, and undaunted front, must be our way." ³¹ On his return from the stormy General Convention of 1844, he could still write: "Our dear Church seems more stable and excellent than ever." ³²

Already, however, it is likely that his mind was assailed with doubts as to whether the *Via Media*, or Anglicanism in any form, was tenable, whether Rome, after all, might not have the only genuine brand of Catholicism. Years afterwards he confessed to Bishop Goësbriand that he had never been satisfied as to the origin and doctrines of the Episcopal Church.³³ As early as 1843 he had begun to attend Catholic services and to call on Catholic clergymen as often as he was away from home and free to do so. Father O'Callaghan, of Burlington, Fathers Pise and Power in New York, Bishops Hughes, McCloskey, and Quarter, of Chicago, the Sulpician Fathers Richards and Villeneuve in Montreal, and Dr. Brownson were among the Catholics with whom he had entered into relations and often into correspondence. Begun chiefly out of curiosity, perhaps, and the desire for information, these practices could scarcely fail to have a deep effect upon him. This soul that was trying so hard, by study, prayer, and mortification, to learn the will of God, this *anima naturaliter catholica*, seemed instinctively attracted and delighted by every Catholic acquaintance, service, and sermon. By the last months of 1845 at the latest, the crucial phase of his

³¹ *Ibid.*, Dec. 2, 1843.

³² *Ibid.*, Oct. 28, 1844.

³³ *Catholic Memoirs of Vermont and New Hampshire*, p. 129.

inner struggle had set in. The question of authority haunted him, as it had Brownson, and as it is likely to haunt every intelligent seeker after the true form of Christianity. Unwilling to preach any longer without being certain that he was legitimately commissioned to do so, and eager for leisure to study thoroughly the problems that confronted him, on November 8th Hoyt obtained an assistant, the Rev. Joseph Perry, in whose favor he then very quickly (December 30, 1845) resigned his parish. On November 12th he had learned that Newman had been received into the Church of Rome. For many months he gave himself wholly to an inquiry into "the history, character, claims, doctrines, and usages of the Roman Catholic Church." Before his conclusion had been reached, it was accelerated, probably, by Bishop Hopkins — his one-time close friend, with whom since 1843 he had had but cold and formal relations — who first assailed him with a series of indignant letters, because of his "Romish tendencies," and then published the correspondence along with a formal censure upon his almost-fallen presbyter.³⁴ By early summer the die was cast. He must leave the Episcopal Church, so Hoyt wrote to a fellow "seceder," that he might die in peace.³⁵ On July 24, 1846, he announced to Bishop Hopkins his determination, and left at once for Montreal. There, on the following day, he was received into the Church by Father Richards, a sometime Methodist minister, who had once gone thither to convert the Sulpicians to Protestantism and, instead, had become a Catholic. On the 26th, as he wrote in his diary, "I received the Holy Sacrament — and for the first time. May I ever gratefully and devoutly remember it, as also the events of yesterday. I am at last a Catholic, God be thanked!" After returning to Vermont, a few days later he was back in Canada, bringing his entire family. On August 1st his beloved and talented wife, who, even earlier than he, had decided to become a Catholic, was received into the Church at Chambly by Father Mignault, and then all the Hoyt children.

³⁴ The *Pastoral Letter* referred to above.

³⁵ Wm. E. P. Wadhams to James McMaster (both "seceders," about a letter of Hoyt to the Rev. Mr. Major, of Philadelphia), July 6, 1846 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

All of them were to become exemplary Catholics, and two of the daughters were to become nuns.

For the next thirty years the one-time Protestant minister served the Church as a layman — a wellnigh perfect example of what Catholic laymen should be. No one could have been more faithful and eager than he, not only to fulfill every Catholic duty, but to do far more than was of obligation. Daily, except when absolutely prevented, he attended Mass, and almost daily he received Holy Communion. Daily his diary records, first of all and as the most important fact of the day, whether or not he had been able to attend the holy sacrifice and receive the Blessed Sacrament. Of his complete and unclouded happiness in the possession of integral Catholicism and in the spiritual home that he had at last found, every page of his journal affords eloquent proof.

It was for him a delight to undertake every work for the Church that lay within his power, but always in a characteristically modest and self-effacing way and with reverent regard for ecclesiastical authority. His indefatigable lay apostolate brought into the Church a small host of converts, some of whom will be mentioned later. Since the Catholics of St. Albans, at the time of his conversion, had neither a resident pastor nor a regular place of worship, he gathered them in his own house for prayers and instruction. When through his efforts a pastor had been obtained from Bishop Fitzpatrick, Hoyt became the soul of the enterprise of building a church. For that enterprise he served as treasurer; gave lavishly from his own means; traveled to Albany, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Boston, to collect money by house-to-house visits among the poor, but unfailingly generous, Irish Catholics. In every stage of the building, equipping, and adornment of the edifice he was Father Hamilton's first lieutenant, and the Church of the Immaculate Conception has with justice been called "a striking monument of his zeal . . . erected chiefly through his exertions." ³⁶

Throughout the later years that zeal never flagged. Catechizing the children, training and leading choirs, playing the organ

³⁶ Bishop Goësbriand, *Catholic Memoirs*, p. 136.

in the Burlington Cathedral, giving to Catholic causes and to the poor, assisting Bishop or pastors in any way that might be asked, attending Catholic gatherings far and wide about the country — in all ways that were open to him he was tireless in serving his Master and his Church. His Bishop, the clergy, and the people alike found edification in his example, and loved and venerated him.

Down to 1859 Mr. Hoyt remained in St. Albans, supporting himself by the practice of law. Then he removed to Burlington, where for some years he edited the *Sentinel*. After 1868 he resided in New York, as a merchant and cashier of the Southern Railroad. On January 16, 1875, he was bereft of his wife, who for nearly thirty years had shared all the interests, the activities, and the intensity of his Catholic life. Henceforth his one thought was to give his remaining years to the direct service of God in the priesthood. January 19, 1876 — at the age of sixty-three — he entered Seton Hall Seminary, in New Jersey, and on May 26, 1877, he was ordained by Bishop Corrigan. For six years he labored as an assistant priest at several New York churches (chiefly St. Michael's, 1877-1881, and St. Ann's, 1881-1883), leaving, as one of his pastors has attested, "a blessed record"; winning all who approached him by "his patience, his gentleness, his devotion, his great humility"; "ministering with zeal to the sick and the poor and the ignorant . . . prompt to perform the slightest duty, never, though feeble . . . failing in a single appointment or in one duty."³⁷

A beautiful life was crowned by a beautiful death. On the feast of the Immaculate Conception, 1883, at his own request he sang the High Mass in St. Ann's Church, and with a vigor and depth of feeling that surprised those present. He gave himself Holy Communion — his Viaticum it proved to be — and, before giving Communion to the people, was just in the act of adoring his Eucharistic Lord when a stroke of apoplexy seized him, and he sank senseless to the floor. Never having regained consciousness, he died three days later. His funeral offered the

³⁷ Msgr. T. S. Preston, *In Memoriam: Reverend William Henry Hoyt* (New York, 1884), pp. 10-11.

extremely rare spectacle of the bier of a Catholic priest surrounded by his children and grandchildren.

Bishop Goësbriand counted up more than fifty persons in Vermont who owed their conversion or their training in the Catholic Faith to William Henry Hoyt; and many of these, he added, were persons of superior education and high standing in society.³⁸ Among them were various relatives of Mrs. Hoyt: her mother, Mrs. Deming; her sister, Maria Deming Tucker; and the latter's husband, Colonel Nathaniel Tucker, who became a great friend, and was frequently the host or the traveling companion, of Bishop Fitzpatrick.

Mr. Hoyt's conversion was followed by what might almost be called an epidemic of conversions among the members — including not a few of the leading members — of his former Episcopalian congregation. Among these were Benjamin H. Smalley, one of the foremost lawyers of Vermont, with his sister Laura, his wife (Mrs. Julia C. Smalley), his children, and his mother-in-law, Mrs. Cynthia Penniman (whose husband had been the stepfather of the first famous Vermont convert, Fanny Allen). Then there were Judge Luther B. Hunt and his family, and Mr. and Mrs. Gardiner G. Smith, with their eight children. A pathetic interest attaches to the case of the three Barlow sisters — the gentle, contemplative Deborah, the gay and sparkling Helen, and the practical, energetic Anna — the daughters of the Hon. Bradley Barlow, one of the wealthiest and foremost citizens of St. Albans. It was Deborah, sent to a convent school in Montreal, who first caught a glimpse of the truth and beauty of Catholicism, and transmitted her enthusiasm to her sisters. Henceforth, despite the stern prohibitions and counter-measures of their father, the watchword of all of them was: "Catholic I am, and Catholic I must be"; and with the help and encouragement of the Hoyts and Tuckers, after many vicissitudes, all three sisters attained their desire. Very quickly, however, it became apparent that, as one of them wrote, they were "betroted to death"; for that scourge of New England, consumption, had fastened itself upon them. Thanking God that

³⁸ *Catholic Memoirs*, p. 135.

they were privileged to glorify Him by suffering, and that now they were "going home," within two years the three sank into the grave, united in death as they had been in life.³⁹

Among other converts whom Father Hoyt drew towards the Church, the most outstanding, probably, was Professor George Allen. The son of a distinguished Vermont judge and himself a man of the most varied and unmistakable talents, Allen had first been an Episcopal minister and Hoyt's immediate predecessor as rector of St. Albans. Turning then to a scholarly career, he had, since 1845, held the chair of Ancient Languages at the University of Pennsylvania, where he was to spend the rest of his long life and to win the reputation of a supremely brilliant teacher. Although separated by distance, he and Hoyt had remained close friends; and a long correspondence between them, supplemented by visits and discussions, brought Allen, too, to enter the Catholic Church in 1847.⁴⁰

Another contemporary group of Vermont converts was started by Charles Austin, originally of Orwell, Addison County. Ordered out of his home by his father for the crime of having embraced Catholicism while in school in Canada, this young man went to Albany, where he established himself as a lawyer and whence he exerted himself effectively to spread his new faith among his Vermont friends. Among those who could trace their conversion directly or indirectly to his influence were: his brother, Gustavus Austin, of Burlington, with his wife and children; General De Witt Clarke, of Burlington, an eminent editor and public man of that time (Secretary of the Vermont Senate, 1840-1851; Executive Clerk of the United States Senate, 1851-1860, etc.) and a most admirable Catholic; the latter's talented wife, Mrs. Caroline Gardner Clarke, and

³⁹ Their story is beautifully told in *The Young Catholics, or Memoirs of the Three Sisters, Debbie, Helen, and Anna Barlow, compiled by Mrs. Julia C. Smalley, edited by Very Rev. Z. Druon* (St. Louis, 1878). The home where the three sisters died — the former Hoyt residence — now houses the Notre Dame nuns of the parish, and is still called the Villa Barlow.

⁴⁰ On him see Robert E. Thompson, "Professor George Allen, LL.D.," *Penn Monthly*, VII (July, 1876), 562-583; and "An Autobiographical Fragment of the Late Professor George Allen, LL.D.," *ibid.* (Aug., 1876), 648-652; also *Dictionary of American Biography*, I (New York, 1928), 190.

his mother, Mrs. Lydia Meech; and finally Abby Maria Hemenway (1828-1890), whose several volumes of Catholic poetry will not, perhaps, render her immortal, but whose massive five-volume *Vermont Historical Gazetteer* will place every student of the history of the Green Mountain State eternally in debt to her.⁴¹

IV

The great increase in the Catholic population encouraged journalistic enterprises. The *Boston Pilot*, which changed its name during 1859, to *The Pilot*, enjoyed ever-increasing popularity, and became the leading Catholic paper in the United States.⁴² Competitors, such as the *Boston Vindicator*, the *Nation*, *O'Neil's Irish Pictorial*, and the *American Celt* appeared, but failed to overcome the supremacy of *The Pilot*. And for a time the Diocese possessed an official organ of its own, the *Boston Catholic Observer*.⁴³

This paper was started by Father Nicholas J. O'Brien, of Saint Nicholas' Church, East Boston. When Father O'Brien proposed to venture into the field of journalism, the Bishop gave his approval, and allowed the *Catholic Observer* to be known as the official paper of the Diocese.⁴⁴ Father O'Brien was the editor, and he was assisted in his work by Father George Haskins and Orestes Brownson.⁴⁵

The policies of the paper were distinctly Catholic. These were declared to be: to instruct the people in their Faith, to describe the activities of the Church throughout the world, to

⁴¹ A vivid insight into this little circle of eminent and mundane Vermonters, suddenly transformed into zealous Catholics, is to be obtained from Miss Hemenway's *Clarke Papers*, *Mrs. Meech and Her Family*, *Home Letters*, *Familiar Incidents*, and *Narratives*, *Linked for Preservation* (Burlington, 1878). On Miss Hemenway herself—that little known but most indefatigable of Vermont Catholic writers—see Walter H. Crockett (ed.), *Vermonters, a Book of Biographies* (Brattleboro, 1931), pp. 122-125. The Notre Dame Archives contain many letters from her to Brownson.

⁴² Rev. Arthur J. Riley, "Early History of *The Pilot*," *Pilot*, March 8, 1930.

⁴³ It should be remembered that *The Pilot* was not the official paper of the Diocese.

⁴⁴ *Catholic Observer*, Jan. 16, 1847; June 14, 1848; *Pilot*, Jan. 9, 1847.

⁴⁵ Henry F. Brownson, *Brownson's Middle Life* (Detroit, 1899), p. 198; *Memoranda*, Jan. 15, 1847; *Pilot*, loc. cit.

avoid political matters, with the exception of those relating to Ireland. The articles explaining Catholic doctrines were of great value, since many of them were written for the purpose of answering objections raised by non-Catholics and especially by colporteurs. The paper took a very conservative stand on Irish affairs. Ireland, in its view, made great progress when led by Daniel O'Connell. But when the Young Irelanders sought to destroy the Repeal Association, then Ireland came to be regarded with contempt. This policy was not too well received by the paper's readers, but the editor refused to change his viewpoint. He was devoted to the country of his ancestors, but he would not support a movement which could end only in terrible slaughter. He would never stoop to flattery to gain popularity or put money in his pocket.⁴⁶

In the meantime another paper, published by two Catholics, appeared in January, 1847. This was the *Boston Vindicator*. Its object was to familiarize the people with politics, promote the welfare of the emigrant, and advocate Repeal.⁴⁷ The venture was not successful, and in February, 1849, it was absorbed by the *Catholic Observer*.⁴⁸

But the fortunes of *The Observer* were not prospering, and in October, 1849, it ceased publication, and its affairs were turned over to *The Pilot*.⁴⁹ The *Catholic Observer* failed because of mismanagement. Father O'Brien was a very able man, but he proved to be totally incapable of conducting its financial affairs.⁵⁰ Poor Brownson, who at one crisis in *The Observer's* affairs had agreed to aid the publication with his credit, lost heavily in the venture.

Its disappearance left the field once more to *The Pilot*. But now the status of this paper was somewhat changed, for instead of having a layman as editor, it received in that capacity Father John Roddan, of Quincy. Father Roddan was the first Boston priest to be educated in Rome at the College of the Propaganda. Having lived in Europe during the days of revolutionary move-

⁴⁶ *Catholic Observer*, Jan. 10, 18, 1849. ⁴⁷ *Boston Vindicator*, Jan. 21, 1847.

⁴⁸ *Catholic Observer*, Feb. 8, 1849. ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, Oct. 4, 1849.

⁵⁰ *Brownson's Middle Life*, p. 198.

ments, he came back to Boston with a definite leaning towards radical theories.⁵¹ Fortunately for him, he was a great friend of Brownson,⁵² and that gentleman probably corrected his ideas and turned him into more conservative paths. At any rate, his political beliefs did change, and, without any objection from the Bishop, he assumed his post as the helmsman of *The Pilot*. But it should be pointed out that the paper was not the official organ of the Diocese.⁵³ When Father Roddan died in 1858, his post was taken by Father Joseph M. Finotti.

This new arrangement brought about a very decided improvement. *The Pilot* became a scholarly paper.⁵⁴ Father Roddan was clear and deep in thought, although his style was rather diffuse, while Father Finotti, with his deep love for literature, brought to the pages of *The Pilot* the best Catholic writers of the times.

Of great interest were the efforts made by *The Pilot* to aid the immigrants in adjusting themselves to their new homes. In a day when much was said in criticism of the new arrivals, but little was done to introduce them to American customs and institutions, *The Pilot's* efforts in this direction were most valuable.

Taking a conservative stand on political questions, the editor of *The Pilot* constantly strove to teach his readers to vote, not for the advantage of any political party, but for the interests of the country. That is, they were to act as independent voters who had considered carefully the issues of the day, and voted from conviction and not under the direction of some political leader.⁵⁵ Nor did *The Pilot* tolerate hyphenism. Irishmen should be a real part of the nation, and not live forever in the United States as foreigners. They were not to consider their residence here as a temporary affair, to be endured merely until Ireland had thrown off England's yoke and was once more free. This was an abuse of the privileges that were bestowed upon them as residents of this country. Thomas D'Arcy McGee's plea that the Irish should study the military sciences, so that

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 327.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 148.

⁵³ *Pilot*, Nov. 8, 1854.

⁵⁴ Father Riley, *Pilot*, March 8, 1930.

⁵⁵ *Pilot*, July 15, 1854.

one day this knowledge could be used against England, was condemned by Father Roddan. America was not a camping ground — the privileges of its citizenship were not to be used to gain Irish independence.⁵⁶

In a series of articles called "Practical Lessons for the Working Classes," *The Pilot* gave much wholesome advice to its readers.⁵⁷ Many of the evils that afflicted the people could be traced to the immoderate use of intoxicating liquor.⁵⁸ It was foolishness to listen to demagogues who railed against the rich. No portion of the American people had in general been kinder to adopted citizens than the wealthy.⁵⁹ The way to success was not through talking, singing, and dancing, but by industry, perseverance, and prudence.⁶⁰ If the Irish people wished to form a stable group of citizens in this land, then they must work, save, own their homes, and not be misled by cheap orators and popularity seekers.⁶¹ Here was a real and worthwhile attempt to instruct the people, and show them just what they must do if they wished to become assimilated and play a vital part in American life.

The 1850's in Massachusetts were marked by the struggles of labor to obtain more reasonable working hours. These efforts did not escape the attention of *The Pilot*. At first glance some of the ideas advanced by that paper would seem to us today to be of an extremely conservative nature. But study of the articles reveals that the author was more intent upon discussing the fundamental causes of labor's difficulties than upon advancing mere temporary solutions. His thesis was that no real breach in the problem could be made until a return to Christian principles took place. When it was recognized that a disintegration of morals had occurred after the Protestant revolt, then something positive could be accomplished. For then men would see that a return to Catholicism, and a reestablishment of charity and justice, founded on divine law and sanctions, would bring with it an alleviation of labor's hardships. If the Church held

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, June 24, Nov. 11, 1854.

⁵⁷ The series ran from April 15 to Dec. 30, 1854.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, April 29, 1854. ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, May 20, 1854.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, May 27, June 24, 1854. ⁶¹ *Ibid.*, June 10, 1854.

the place in the world which God had designed for it, and which men had destroyed, laborers would work fewer hours, they would be cared for when they were sick, old, or disabled, and they would be protected against the tyranny of their masters.

And so one might go on and point out how time and again *The Pilot* came out with sound and solid advice to its readers. Immigrants were advised as to where they should settle. They were castigated for their offenses. They were instructed in their social duties. And it should be noted that anyone who read *The Pilot* with any attention and intelligence at all must have derived some cultural benefit. The articles were well written, there was nothing of cheap journalism about them. True, some of the stories that appeared on its pages were no better than the silly romantic novels of the day. But even here novels of some worth, produced by Catholic writers who struggled to meet the competition of secular authors, and at the same time retain a true Catholic spirit, did appear. And when the reader turned to other columns, there he found real solid worth. World happenings were brought to him and explained from a Catholic viewpoint. The best productions of Catholic orators, lay and clerical, were printed. *The Pilot* was definitely a force of value in the cultural development of the Irish-American people.

This discussion of press activities cannot be ended until a few lines have been devoted to Thomas D'Arcy McGee. After leaving Boston and the staff of *The Pilot*, McGee returned to Ireland, where he became involved in revolutionary activities. Finally, in order to escape arrest, he had to return to New York. Here he started *The Nation*. Soon, however, his violently radical ideas, and his attacks upon priests, because of their attitude to Irish politics, involved him in trouble with Bishop Hughes. McGee determined to go back to Ireland. He came to Boston, and, while preparing for the voyage, received a warning not to return, since he would be arrested.

McGee then revived his paper, changing the name to *The American Celt*. He carried this on for several years, disputing

from time to time with *The Pilot* over Irish affairs. Gradually, however, his views began to change, and the paper devoted itself more and more to advancing the cause of the Irish in America. But McGee's religious beliefs at this time were badly disarranged by his experiences in Ireland and with Bishop Hughes. Then he met Bishop Fitzpatrick, to whom he was related. The Bishop proved to be a kind and sympathetic friend. He recognized the patriotism of the man and his deep love for his country. He helped him to arrange these ideals into a proper relation to situations as they actually were. He revived his Catholic faith. He reformed and remolded him. McGee became his protégé. To express his approval, the Bishop appeared at McGee's lectures.⁶²

Towards the end of 1855 *The Pilot* and McGee quarreled once more.⁶³ McGee was accused of insulting Catholic bishops, priests, and people. He left Boston and moved to Montreal. In the last decade of his life the journalist was to turn into a genuine statesman, one of the framers of the Canadian Confederation, and, finally, this one-time revolutionist against British rule was to be assassinated because of his newfound loyalty to the British crown.⁶⁴

⁶² *Pilot*, Jan. 27, 1855; *Memoranda*, Jan. 22, 1855.

⁶³ *Pilot*, Sept. 29, Oct. 13, 1855.

⁶⁴ In writing this account of McGee's later life in Boston and Canada I made free use of: Isabel Skelton, *The Life of Thomas D'Arcy McGee* (Gardenvale, 1925).

CHAPTER XVI

"I WILL FOLLOW THE CROSS TO THE END"

I

By 1858 there were eighty churches and sixty-nine priests in the Diocese. This, it should be remembered, was in Massachusetts alone. Progress was also to be found on the spiritual side of the ledger. After 1863, yearly retreats for priests became an established custom. Missions and retreats for the laity were frequently held in the various parishes. The Jubilees of 1851, 1859, and 1861 were eagerly entered into by the people. Priests found it necessary during these periods of grace to remain in the confessional for fourteen hours at a time.¹ The number of communions was tremendous. At St. Mary's, Boston, in 1851, fifty-five hundred people received the Holy Eucharist, while three thousand approached the communion rail at St. John's.² The Jubilee of 1865 produced a wonderful effect all over the Diocese.³ Confessions were so numerous that it was impossible to hear all that came, seeking the Sacrament of Penance.⁴

There was, however, a deficiency of priests. In 1855 the Bishop believed that he had a sufficient supply of seminarians to care for the future needs of the Diocese. But sickness and death reduced the number of diocesan priests, and new concentrations of Catholics in various communities brought demands for pastors and churches. By 1857 Bishop Fitzpatrick was making plans to send as many young men as the Diocese could afford to support to the various seminaries to study for the priesthood.

This meant an increase in the amount of money that would be expended for seminarians. As a result the first formal collection for that purpose was taken up on Pentecost Sunday,

¹ *Pilot*, Jan. 15, 1859. ² *Memoranda*, April 6, 1851.

³ *Ibid.*, March 31, 1865. ⁴ *Ibid.*, March 29, 1865.

May 31, 1857. In preparation for this the Bishop wrote a Pastoral Letter to the clergy. He reminded them of a situation of which they were fully cognizant. Most of them had from time to time asked for help to carry on their duties. They knew, too, that many communities could build churches and maintain priests and had made this known to the Bishop. But he had been unable to grant these requests and could only exhort both priests and people to endure "the famine of the word and the Sacraments of God, until it should please the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into the field." At that time, he wrote, the Diocese had twenty-five young men studying in various colleges and seminaries. This number had to be increased and even doubled. This meant that a considerable amount of money had to be spent. Therefore he was instituting the custom of taking up a collection each year.⁵

The opening of two new seminaries was of great aid to the Diocese in securing suitable training for its future priests.

Pius IX proposed to the Bishops of the United States that an American College should be established at Rome. The Eighth Provincial Council of Baltimore appointed a committee to handle the details, and on December 8, 1859, the seminary was opened. Apparently Bishop Fitzpatrick had very little part in establishing this seminary, although he did do a great deal of prodding to discover just what would be expected of the bishops throughout the country.⁶ He was, moreover, extremely interested in the question as to who would be the first rector, and gave his approval to Archbishop Hughes' candidates, the Rev. William McCloskey, and the Rev. Thomas Heyden.⁷

The purchase of a defunct Methodist foundation at Troy, New York, known as Troy University, by Archbishop Hughes,

⁵ *Pilot*, May 22, 1858.

⁶ Bishop Fitzpatrick to Archbishop Purcell, April 22, 1857 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

⁷ Bishop Fitzpatrick to Archbishop Hughes, Sept. 3, 1859 (*New York Dioc. Arch.*, A 11).

The development of the American College may be followed in:

(1) J. L. Spalding, D.D., *The Life of the Most Rev. M. J. Spalding, D.D., Archbishop of Baltimore* (New York, 1873);

(2) Rt. Rev. Henry A. Brann, *History of the American College of the Roman Catholic Church of the United States, Rome, Italy* (New York, 1910),

furnished the New York Province with a provincial seminary. The Archbishop bought the buildings, and then began to look for a faculty to staff it. He first tried to secure the Sulpicians. He wrote to Bishop Fitzpatrick, who was in Europe, and asked him to use his influence in persuading the Superior-General of the Sulpicians to send men to Troy.⁸ But the request was refused, because it was feared that a third seminary would injure the Sulpicians' establishments at Montreal and Baltimore.⁹

Bishop Fitzpatrick then began to seek priests for a faculty in Belgium. He was aided in this by Bishop McCloskey, of Albany, who went to Europe especially for this purpose.¹⁰ They first approached Cardinal Sterckx of Malines, who refused their request. Then they appealed to the Bishop of Ghent, Louis Joseph Delebecque, who agreed to send four priests.¹¹ It was stipulated that they were to stay in the United States for four years, and then return to Belgium,¹² leaving the secular priests of the Province to take entire charge of the seminary. To Bishop Fitzpatrick must be given the credit for the greater part of the work that was necessary in order to complete these arrangements.¹³ At that time the Bishop was in a most deplorable condition, having suffered a paralytic stroke, yet he was so eager to have this new seminary that he ignored his infirmities and determinedly carried on until he had attained success. This solicitude for the new seminary can also be seen in his reaction to Archbishop Hughes' death on January 3, 1864. The Archbishop, of course, had originated the whole affair, and much had depended on him for its success. His death raised the very definite possibility that his successor might give it up. Bishop Fitzpatrick realized this. He also knew that if his close friend Bishop McCloskey, of Albany, succeeded to the New York

⁸ Archbishop Hughes to Bishop Fitzpatrick, Dec., 1862, in His Eminence John Cardinal Farley, *The Life of John Cardinal McCloskey, First Prince of the Church of America* (New York, 1918), pp. 257-258.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 259.

¹⁰ Bishop McCloskey to Bishop McFarland, Aug. 9, 1863 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

¹¹ His Eminence John Cardinal Farley, *The Life of Cardinal McCloskey*, p. 259; Bishop McCloskey to Bishop McFarland, Dec. 9, 1863 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

¹² His Eminence John Cardinal Farley, *op. cit.*, p. 260.

¹³ *Ibid.*

episcopate, the plans for Troy Seminary would be carried out. And so he wrote to Rome and urged that Bishop McCloskey should be created Archbishop of New York.¹⁴ He also told Bishop McCloskey himself that he must take Archbishop Hughes' place. "Our intended Seminary," he wrote, "is, in my judgment, the most important thing by far in the immediate future of our Church, and your succession will make it sure."¹⁵

The close association of Boston with St. Joseph's Seminary is seen in the fact that the bishops of the Province wished to make Father A. Sherwood Healy its first President. Bishop Fitzpatrick opposed this, fearing that his ancestral background might hamper his success. Father Healy, however, was appointed Vice-President, and it was planned to raise him to the presidency in the future. Bishop Fitzpatrick apparently assented to this, but warned him to be very careful and give the matter much thought before he consented in the future to take complete charge.¹⁶

When the seminary was opened, Bishop Fitzpatrick sent his ecclesiastical students to it. This meant that the Diocese had thirty-four students in the theology department and twenty-seven studying in the philosophy and lower classes.¹⁷

Besides these plans for the future increase in diocesan clergy, the Bishop sought to relieve the pressing need for priests by introducing the Franciscans into the Diocese. Father Emiliano Gerbi was the first to come. He assisted Father O'Brien in Lowell for some time,¹⁸ and then became pastor of St. Mary's Church in Charlestown. The Bishop, however, wanted something more than this. He desired that a Franciscan monastery should be established in the Diocese. This he was not able to attain, since the General of the Order refused to allow an establishment independent of the monastery at Allegany, New York.¹⁹

In 1860 the Bishop began to plan for his new Cathedral. It

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 243.

¹⁵ Bishop Fitzpatrick to Bishop McCloskey, Jan. 15, 1864 (*New York Dioc. Arch.*, A 34).

¹⁶ *Memoranda*, Oct. 20, 1865.

¹⁷ *Pilot*, June 3, 1865.

¹⁸ *Memoranda*, Jan. 16, 1860.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, Dec. 14, 1865.

was a bold undertaking for a man in his condition. Mental strain and labor quickly tired and incapacitated him, yet in his eagerness to build a structure that would have been the crowning glory of the many construction projects that had gone on in the Diocese, he persisted. Into it were to go all the ideas he had gathered from a study of the Gothic churches of Europe. In a city where many beautiful churches had been erected, it was to take its place as second to none. It was to command the attention and respect of all who saw. It was to be a monument of Gothic stateliness and beauty that would have permanently fixed the memory of its builder in the minds of Boston Catholics. But the joy of seeing those grand Gothic walls and buttresses rise on the site which he had purchased was denied him. The Civil War brought financial distress. Parishes suffered because of reduced incomes, and the Bishop used the money he had collected for the Cathedral to relieve them.

The actual construction of the Cathedral was accomplished by his successor, Archbishop Williams. But, with the exception of a few minor changes, Holy Cross Cathedral is Bishop Fitzpatrick's conception. The plans were drawn under his supervision, and embody many of his ideas. Patrick Keeley, the architect, stated that he never met a man who had such grand views of what a cathedral should be. That was high praise, indeed, for Keeley was the foremost church architect of his day.

There is an interesting story connected with this project of building a new cathedral, which has never been told before. It seems that when Archbishop Bedini was in Boston, he became quite anxious that Bishop Fitzpatrick should erect a new cathedral immediately. In a report made by the Archbishop when he returned to Rome, he stated that the Diocese possessed only a mediocre cathedral, one, he believed, that made no impression on non-Catholics, and of which prominent Catholics were not proud. He felt that the position of the Church in Boston would be considerably enhanced if a structure more worthy of the dignity of the Diocese was erected. In fact, the Archbishop seems to have been so concerned about this matter that he con-

sulted with the priests of the Diocese as to the best way to raise money for the project. According to him, fifty priests promised to raise a large sum of money within a year.²⁰

Bishop Fitzpatrick wrote that a new Cathedral seems to have concerned the Archbishop during his stay in Boston more than anything else. He continually spoke about the matter, even in the most unlikely places. The Bishop constantly opposed him, pointing out that at that time he had assumed responsibility for the purchase of almost \$120,000 worth of church property. Moreover, thousands of Catholics in the city could not hear Mass on Sunday because of the lack of sufficient churches. These he felt should be provided for, before a cathedral was built. And, finally, since the whole burden of a new cathedral would fall upon him, he alone should be the judge as to when it was prudent to commence. Apparently the dispute between the two was an earnest one. But Bishop Fitzpatrick, despite the fact that he wished "to render memorable the advent of the first Apostolic Nuncio to the United States," refused to involve himself in difficulties out of which he could not, at least indistinctly, see an issue.²¹

II

The years 1861 and 1862 brought honors to the Bishop. The groups that conferred these distinctions upon him were to some extent influenced by his active support of the Union in the Civil War, but their tokens of esteem were of such a character as to justify the statement that they were to a large degree a recognition of his ability.

The first honor to the Bishop came from Harvard University. On May 25, 1861, the Corporation voted to confer on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity. No Catholic prelate had ever before received this distinction. The citation accompanying the degree was by far the strongest of all those

²⁰ Shea Transcripts (*Georgetown Coll. Arch.* 32.7); Letter of Father Doherty, Springfield (*Boston Dioc. Arch., Reports of Churches prior to 1855*).

²¹ *Memoranda*, Oct. 13, 1853.

read at the Commencement in June when similar degrees were conferred on three other distinguished clergymen. Bishop Fitzpatrick accepted the degree in this very genial note to President Felton:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your very kind letter and of the diploma announcing to me officially the distinction, which the Academical Authorities of Harvard University were pleased to confer upon me at the last Commencement.

Such a tribute of confidence, approbation and respect, coming from a tribunal, which undeniably represents the highest intellect and the most enlightened sagacity in our community, cannot but be gratifying to any one who would wish to win and enjoy the esteem of those most justly esteemed. For this reason, among many others, I value highly the mark of consideration bestowed upon me by your deservedly. . . .

However, it is not wholly impossible that from feelings of respect and even affection for one doctor a gradual passage may be made towards like feelings for the doct . . . St. Ambrose of Milan tells us, . . .²² Nobility of letters is the only one we recognize in this country, the only one we desire; and in order of this nobility, Harvard certainly holds the first and dearest right to issue patents.

And now let me say to you a private word. It seems to me hardly probable that whatever faint light of learning, wisdom or merit may glimmer around the Bishop of Boston in his sphere, could have been of itself discernible from the height of the moral observatory of Cambridge. It must be that President Felton, guided by some partial fondness, directed towards the spot a telescope of no small Power. But even so, I can assure you that your friendship and esteem are a possession of which I feel proud and which I shall always value in the highest degree.²³

Following this the Bishop was elected to a fellowship in one of the most exclusive learned societies in the country, the

²² Illegible.

²³ Bishop Fitzpatrick to President Felton of Harvard, July 21, 1861 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*, copy). The original cannot be found, and unfortunately, the copy is in a mutilated condition.

American Academy of Arts and Sciences. The proposal to admit him was made by James Walker, Jared Sparks, George E. Ellis, A. R. Peabody, and Chandler Robbins. The Bishop was elected to the Literature and Fine Arts section of the Academy, in which he had as companions Longfellow and Lowell.

Another honor was proposed for the Bishop during the debate in the Massachusetts Senate over the use of the Bible in the public schools. Senator Twombly attempted to have the whole question set aside by urging that the good will of Massachusetts to the Church should be demonstrated by electing the Bishop to the Board of Overseers of Harvard College. The plan was approved by the Senate, but before final action could be taken in the House, Bishop Fitzpatrick wrote to Caleb Cushing and requested him to secure the withdrawal of the bill.²⁴

III

It was Bishop Fitzpatrick's positive and unyielding opposition to any lay interference in the administration of church property that put an end to trusteeism in the Diocese. Throughout the years of his administration he would never make the slightest concession to any plan or petition that would allow laymen control of temporalities. The policy was accepted by all Catholics, with the exception of a few dissenters in Fall River and Lowell. In both these places there was a small group who awaited an opportunity to take all authority out of diocesan hands and place it completely in boards elected by the various parishes. The occasion to do this came when the Know-Nothings controlled the Legislature.

Early in 1855 petitions appeared before the House from Lowell and Fall River. They were signed principally by Catholics. One of these asserted that the Roman Catholics of the Diocese had purchased several million dollars' worth of property, title to which they were arbitrarily forced to vest in the Bishop of Boston. This meant that a power was being exercised which was "dangerous to Republicanism because destructive to

²⁴ *Pilot*, Feb. 22, 1862.

the individual independence of the Citizen, and antagonistic to the genius and spirit of our free Institutions." The system compelled Roman Catholics to submit to oppression and extortion. It placed them in the danger of having all ecclesiastical property revert to the Bishop's heirs if he died without making a will. There were four other petitions of a similar kind. They all asked that a law should be passed vesting all property in trustees elected by members of each congregation. These trustees would be accountable only to the congregations they represented.²⁵

The law was easily passed. The diocesan authorities very wisely offered no opposition to it. It provided: (1) No person holding an ecclesiastical office could acquire personal property or real estate; (2) title to all property bought for any parish, congregation, or religious society had to be vested in that parish, congregation, or religious society; (3) any property acquired prior to the passage of the law was to be held in trust by the person possessing it until he died. Title was then to be vested in the parish.²⁶ This was a sweeping statute that, as years went by, would have deprived the Bishop of Boston of any control over the temporal affairs of his Diocese.

Fortunately, no attention was paid to the law and it was quietly dropped from the Revised Statutes of 1860. But the danger still existed that one day some dissatisfied group might attempt to gain control of diocesan property. Bishop Fitzpatrick decided to forestall this possibility by setting up a system similar to that used in other dioceses. A petition was presented to the Massachusetts General Court that the "Roman Catholic Churches or Congregations" of the State be allowed to assume corporate powers. These powers were to be vested in the Bishop, Vicar-General, pastor, and two laymen. The affairs of each congregation or church were to be governed by them. The pastor in each case would be the priest in charge of the parish. The laymen would be chosen from each congregation by the

²⁵ *Acts, 1855*, chap. 314. See the documents relating to this law (*Mass. State Arch.*).

²⁶ *Acts, 1855*, chap. 314.

Bishop, Vicar-General, and pastor. The legislative committee receiving the petition rejected it.

The basis for the refusal was the fact that the controlling power was given, not to the congregations, but to a hierarchical body. Furthermore, authority over such a great amount of property, it was claimed, gave to the Bishop a vast political as well as ecclesiastical power. And, finally, the committee asserted that the system was directly contrary to democratic principles. The committee believed that all control should be surrendered to the congregation.²⁷

The Bishop would, however, never consent to such a dangerous system. The scandalous behavior and unhappy experiences that had occurred in this Diocese, and to a far greater extent in other dioceses, prohibited it. This forced him to continue under the system that he had first adopted, with the result that when he was dangerously ill, he was obliged to go through the tedious process of transferring all property to his Coadjutor-elect, Father John Williams.

IV

Reading the record of Bishop Fitzpatrick's activities from 1858 until his last illness, one is continually amazed that a man in his physical condition could have accomplished so much. He was ill. His mind could tolerate only a small amount of fatiguing labor, yet he drove himself to duty after duty, until someone would intervene and persuade him to seek some rest in the Adirondacks. If the reader of his *Memoranda* were not aware of the Bishop's condition, he would never suspect what the real situation was. At one time he was tactfully guiding the organization of the Ancient Order of Hibernians. At another he was cheerfully expending his strength on sick calls. He was continually preaching sermons in all parts of the Diocese. The administration of the Sacrament of Confirmation was faithfully attended to in every parish. The various schools were frequently visited. Many new churches had to be dedicated.

²⁷ *Senate Doc. 209, 1866 (Mass. State Arch.).*

The affairs of Boston College had to be settled. The new House of the Angel Guardian occupied him. The dispute over the Bible in the schools demanded skillful management. The faithful were always sure to find him in the confessional at the appointed hours. The many and involved details of the transfer of the old Cathedral property and the purchase of a new site were a terrific strain upon him.

In 1862 his labors drew from him the last bit of energy that had supported him, and he collapsed. The doctor advised him to go to Europe for a rest. The Bishop left Boston in April, 1862. In June the Diocese was shocked by a rumor that he had died while on the way to Rome.²⁸ It was false and, in fact, reports were soon received that the Bishop's health was improving, and that he would return to his Diocese in December. He did not come at that time, probably because he was negotiating with the Sulpicians in regard to Troy Seminary.

The next news of the Bishop was the sad intelligence that he had been stricken by paralysis. This took place in May, 1863.²⁹ His left side was completely paralyzed. He made a slow recovery from the tragic affliction, and by the end of 1863 was working successfully with his friend Bishop McCloskey to secure the Troy faculty.

Archbishop Hughes died on January 3, 1864, and the Bishop decided to remain in Europe, rather than to run the risk of dying while making the voyage back to the States. He knew that his death would seriously complicate the temporal affairs of New York, since he was one of the Archbishop's executors.³⁰ But he was not idle. He could work only with the greatest difficulty, but his mind was still active and keen. In April, 1863, he wrote to the Diocesan Chancellor, Father James Healy, and ordered him to take up a collection for the inhabitants of Western Ireland who were suffering from a cruel famine.³¹ The Catholics of Massachusetts contributed \$43,466 to this charity.³²

²⁸ Father Tucker's *Diary*, June 2, 1862 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

²⁹ *Memoranda*, July 9, 1863. ³⁰ *Ibid.*, March 10, 1864.

³¹ Letter of the Chancellor, James A. Healy, to the priests of the Diocese, April 11, 1863 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*, volume of clippings, 1859-1862).

³² *Memoranda*, July 20, 1863.

The Bishop was being consulted by Edwin S. Eastman, the United States Consul at Queenstown, Ireland, and Henry Sanford, the United States Minister at Brussels, Belgium, concerning the proper steps that should be taken to induce the Irish to immigrate to this country.³³ The Bishop was also making urgent appeals to the Propagation of the Faith Society for allotments of money for the Diocese.³⁴ And he was storming Rome, urging that Bishop McCloskey should be appointed Archbishop of New York.

On September 2, 1864, the Bishop finally returned to the Diocese, bringing with him Dr. Vandenhende, the new President of Troy Seminary.³⁵

V

The active days of Bishop Fitzpatrick's career were ended. Until his death he was an invalid. At times he did recover sufficiently to be up and around, and even when he was very ill, he would go out for a ride in his carriage. But he never again preached to the congregation that so deeply loved their "Bishop John." He could not say Mass, nor could he administer the Sacrament of Confirmation. Recognizing his condition, he decided that the time had come for him to have a Coadjutor. Many years before, he had determined that when that day came Father John Williams should be his successor.

John Williams was the Bishop's closest and most devoted friend. A strange friendship, too, for they were extremely unlike one another. The Bishop was genial, humorous; he loved good company; he was intellectually brilliant; while Father Williams was reserved and taciturn. But he had qualities that appealed to the Bishop — his prudence, his humility, his devotion to duty, his love of God, and determination to serve Him to the best of his ability. These were characteristics that the

³³ Edwin S. Eastman to Henry S. Sanford, Feb. 24, 1864 (*Dept. of State Arch., Despatches, Belgium, vol. 8, Dec. 31, 1863, to Aug. 21, 1865*).

³⁴ Propagation of the Faith Society to Bishop Fitzpatrick, July 23, 28, Aug. 6, 1864 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

³⁵ *Memoranda*, Sept. 2, 1864.

Bishop greatly prized. Such things as the ability to take a place in society and to discourse learnedly were desirable but not vital. The priestly virtues were most important. Father Williams devoutly cultivated them. Nothing else was needed.

The relation between the two men dated back to Father Williams' days in the Montreal Seminary at the time that Bishop Fitzpatrick was acting as a professor. Later the friendship was strengthened by their many years of close association in the work of the Cathedral parish. In 1854, when Bishop Fitzpatrick went to Rome, Father Williams was left in charge of the Diocese. In 1856 he was made rector of the Cathedral parish.³⁶ A year later he was asked to assume the burden of St. James' Church. During the period of the Bishop's first illness, he ably carried on the administration of the Diocese. One suspects that from 1854 on he had the power of Vicar-General, but this was never officially and publicly mentioned until 1857. That Bishop Fitzpatrick planned for many years to make Father Williams his successor is clear. When Father Williams was proposed for the new See of Portland, Bishop Fitzpatrick opposed the nomination. At the Third Provincial Council of New York Father Williams was nominated for the proposed See of Watertown. Bishop Fitzpatrick emphatically declared his displeasure, and, much to the astonishment of the bishops, announced that if his Vicar-General was appointed by Rome, he would urge him to decline.³⁷

These demonstrations of a determination to keep Father Williams in Boston, on first thought make it seem rather strange that Bishop Fitzpatrick delayed so long in having Father Williams created a bishop. But, actually, it was perfectly logical. To have decided that Father Williams was to be Bishop of Boston was one thing. To bring about his consecration was another. Probably every bishop has in mind someone whom he desires to succeed him. This was true of Bishop Fitzpatrick. Of all the older priests of the Diocese, Father Williams

³⁶ *Ibid.*, Jan. 20, 1856.

³⁷ Archbishop Hughes to Bishop Bacon, Feb. 3, 1860 (*New York Dioc. Arch.* [copy], A 1).

had, to an eminent degree, the qualifications suitable for a bishop. Therefore, rather than lose him to some other diocese, the Bishop kept him in Boston. But the question as to when he should be made either an auxiliary or coadjutor-bishop was quite a different thing. Down to 1862 Bishop Fitzpatrick felt quite competent to carry on his duties. Another bishop in the Diocese would have been a luxury. Perhaps he also reasoned that since his prospects of continuing as the head of the Diocese were fairly good, objection might be raised to giving him a coadjutor with the right of succession, and he might receive only an auxiliary. Then it would have been possible, when he died, to place some stranger in Boston. After 1862 a second bishop was much needed in the Diocese. But the Bishop was in Europe for many months and could not give the matter the personal, "on the scene" attention that was needed. When he came home, he may have had to spend some time preparing the ground. It was, after all, no small matter to guide the selection of a bishop for such an important diocese as Boston. It may also have been difficult to gather the bishops of the Province together. But in October, 1865, the opportunity arose. There was a meeting of the bishops of the New York Province while they were at Albany for the consecration of Bishop Conroy. The question of a coadjutor for Boston was considered, and three nominees were picked: Fathers Williams, Peter Blenkinsop, S.J., and William Blenkinsop.³⁸ They were all definitely Bishop Fitzpatrick's selections, for the Blenkinsops were also close acquaintances of the Bishop.

Father Williams was selected by the Congregation of the Propaganda on December 4, 1865. Pope Pius IX named him the titular Bishop of Tripoli, and Coadjutor of Boston, at a Consistory held on January 8, 1866. The Papal Bulls arrived in Boston on February 9, 1866, four days before the Bishop died.

³⁸ Bishop McFarland's *Diary*, Oct. 16, 1865 (*Hartford Dioc. Arch.*).

VI

The dark veil will soon be drawn from my eyes as the gloomy winter passes before the spring. I shall soon be where there are millions of blessed souls, sanctified souls, beautiful souls around the throne glorifying God. This land is consecrated to the Blessed Virgin Mary and I renew the consecration.³⁹

Bishop Fitzpatrick was dying. On Saturday evening, February 10, 1866, he suddenly gained control of his mind, raised himself up from his bed, held aloft a cross that had been placed in his hand, and pronounced the beautiful words just quoted. When he had finished, he sang the episcopal blessing, calling down God's graces upon the land he so dearly loved. Then gazing upon the cross, he cried out, "I will follow the Cross to the end."⁴⁰ The end came three days later.

On February 13, 1866, Bishop Fitzpatrick died. Gathered around his bedside were his successor, Bishop-elect John Williams, Father James A. Healy, the Bishop's sister, Mrs. Boland, two Sisters of Charity, and a few other close friends. They recited the prayers for the dying, the Bishop fervently joining in the responses. Someone intoned the hymn, *Jesu dulcis memoriae*. But memories faltered over the verses. And then for the last time the Bishop raised his voice in praise of God. The words poured from his lips — his memory did not falter.⁴¹ The hymn ended. Death came.

In the mansions on Beacon Hill and the humblest tenement in Stillman Street, there was sincere sorrow when it was announced that Bishop John was dead. The bells of the city tolled as his body was brought from the rectory to the Pro-Cathedral. Large details of police guided with difficulty the crowds that came to see for the last time the beloved Bishop. The solemn High Mass of Requiem was celebrated on February 16th by Bishop de Goësbriand, who was assisted by the patriarch of the Diocese, Father Fitton. Father Edward J. O'Brien, of St. Mary's Church, New Haven, was deacon, Father

³⁹ *Pilot*, March 24, 1866.⁴⁰ *Pilot*, March 24, 1866.⁴¹ *Ibid.*

A. Sherwood Healy was sub-deacon. Two archbishops, eight bishops, and a multitude of priests, were present. For the first time the Governor of the State and his staff attended the funeral services of a Catholic Bishop.⁴² Archbishop McCloskey preached a short, simple eulogy, that very skillfully revealed the character of the Bishop and the high esteem his brother bishops had for him.⁴³

John Bernard Fitzpatrick, the third Bishop of Boston, was a man of superior intelligence. His judgment was sound. His conduct of the Diocese was conservative and efficient. He was a cultured gentleman, whose abilities measured up to the high standards of refined Bostonians. Nor did he fail to balance these qualities by practicing the laws of the spiritual life. He was just. He was charitable. He knew the value of prudence. The virtue of fortitude supported him in the labors of his episcopate. His service of God was filial and reverential. And, under God's grace, he had a deep insight into the mysteries of revealed religion. He might have achieved great fame, but he preferred the obscurity that came with devotion to prosaic duties. The honor of being the first Archbishop of Boston was firmly rejected by him. His fidelity to his office was so constant that it caused a tragic collapse of health.

Bishop Fitzpatrick developed the diocesan organization that had been briefly sketched by his predecessor. Under him the Diocese developed from a small group of churches scattered over four states into an Episcopal See embracing one hundred and twelve churches in Massachusetts. He established that important centre of diocesan activity, the Chancery Office. He definitely ended lay interference in ecclesiastical affairs. He instituted the yearly custom of contributing to the support of students for the priesthood. He was most active in organizing distinctly American institutions for the education of seminarians. Holy Cross College owes its continued existence to him, and Boston College is his foundation. It was his careful

⁴² Not without sharp criticism from *The Congregationalist* in its issue for Feb. 23, 1866.

⁴³ *Pilot*, Feb. 24, 1866.

planning that brought the Society of Jesus to Boston. A great teaching order, the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, began its work under him. The Bishop's charity was expressed by the St. Vincent de Paul Society, the House of the Angel Guardian, the Home for Destitute Catholic Children, and the expansion of St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum. Nor did he forget the harvest that awaited missionaries in foreign lands. The Propagation of the Faith Society was his answer to that call.

He was a great American. Quietly and without rancor he sought to secure freedom of religion. He skillfully turned the tide of bigotry. During the Civil War his people went forth to fight for the Union cause. When he was sick and stricken with paralysis, he sacrificed his strength in turning European opinion to the Northern cause. His success was far greater than that of many a trained diplomat.

His work with the immigrants should not be forgotten. He was the shepherd of the thousands upon thousands who came to the Diocese from Ireland. They saw him at Deer Island. He was with them in the cholera hospitals. They heard his voice throughout the Diocese, instructing them in the ways of God. They saw him working amongst them in the crowded tenement districts. He saved them from the persecution of their enemies. He defended them against malicious accusations. And his love for these Irish subjects of his reached back to Ireland, and brought relief from want to many a sorrowing family.

These are his historian's impressions of the man. Now let two men who knew him briefly estimate his worth. Archbishop Bedini considered him to be one of the three outstanding bishops of this country.⁴⁴ Robert C. Winthrop, eminent Massachusetts statesman and a Protestant, said of him:

He was a man of excellent spirit, of a genial temper, of peculiar tact and sterling common-sense, of rare accomplishments, of a noble presence; without anything of presumption or ostentation, yet of striking dignity; shrinking from all display, except such as was inseparable from the ceremonies of the Church over which he presided, and devoting his whole time

⁴⁴ Shea Transcripts (*Georgetown Coll. Arch.*, 32.7).

and thought and strength to the care of his diocese. He had, indeed, too little self-appreciation for his own worldly fame, and has left no record of his learning and acquirements except in the memory of those who knew him. He seldom delivered formal discourses. He engaged in no doctrinal controversies. He wrote no theological essays. He committed absolutely nothing to the press — not a single pamphlet, hardly a single printed page, is left to preserve his name in our libraries. But his name will be cherished in the hearts of the whole religious denomination to which he belonged, and in those of a wide circle of personal friends of all denominations.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ *Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* (Boston, Cambridge, 1868), III, 116-117.

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